

Valley Women's Voice

May 1981

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ABORTION RALLY TRIUMPHANT ABORTION RALLY TRIUMPHANT

by Amy Jenness

As more than 500 pro-choice ralliers chanted outside, delegates to the Massachusetts Democratic Party's annual convention, held April 11 at the Civic Center in Springfield, voted *not* to discuss the Human Life Amendment.

Jean Grossholtz, one of the organizers of the rally, announced to those rallied: "We have just received word from our people inside the convention that there are enough delegates who will vote against the Human Life Amendment to block it from being put on the agenda." Spontaneous cheers broke out from the crowd. Without being on the agenda, the Democratic Party cannot discuss the HLA or vote to put the amendment on the coming year's platform.

The HLA was proposed by Governor Edward King, Senator Helms and Representatives Hyde, Dornan and Ashbrook, and would have amended the Mass. Constitution to prohibit all abortions, all birth control pills including the morning after pill (because they prevent implantation of a fertilized egg), and the IUD.

Of course, the federal HLA battle is yet to be fought. Under that amendment, any person involved in the act of an abortion (doctors, family, friends) and the woman who has the abortion could be prosecuted for premeditated murder. The intent of every abortion, spontaneous or induced, would have to be investigated; intentional acts would be

subject to criminal prosecution. Crimes committed against a pregnant woman, even if no one knew she was pregnant, would be considered a crime against the fetus as well.

The Springfield rally, which drew unexpectedly large numbers of women, children and men, was begun when Grossholtz said, "Welcome to the Revolution." The opening statement from the Ad Hoc Committee that planned the rally acknowledged that the U.S. Congress and Mass. legislatures are ignoring the majority will as concerns reproductive rights. "Since they will not listen to us in the legislature, we have taken to the streets to demonstrate that women and men who believe in human rights are the majority in this state."

A speech by Attorney Nancy Gertner, who argued the case of *Moe vs. King* (which granted state requirements for abortion funding) emphasized the legal implications of the Human Life Amendment. Nellie Kanno, from the Department of Public Health at UMass, spoke about racism and sexism in the health care system. Diane Raymond, from the Mass. Childbearing Rights Association and Joann Gravell, from ISIS, a local reproductive rights organization for Franklin and Hampshire counties, both spoke about reproductive freedom and how the government is oppressing women.

A rally that attracts large numbers of women and is successful in achieving its ends is heartening to everyone working for change in a repressive society. One



Pro-Choice Rally in Springfield

Photo by Kathy Kirk

woman at the rally said, "Now more than ever we need unity among women so that we can keep fighting for our rights and show that we are strong."

The Ad Hoc Committee that planned

the rally was formed by the Westfield Women's Forum, the Committee for Equal Rights and Reproductive Freedom at UMass, and the Progressive Alliance of Mount Holyoke College.

"The Feminist Case Against Pornography:"

Analyzing the Sex / Violence Message

By Ellen LaFleche

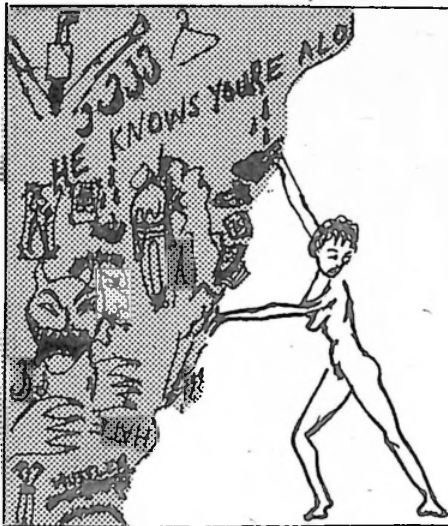
Silent Scream, 1980. An assertive, college-age woman is comfortably embraced in the arms of her lover. While the love making scene is depicted as gentle and romantic, the camera suddenly cuts to a scene in the basement of the house where a long knife is plunged repeatedly into the woman's roommate. The camera pans back and forth between the lovemaking and the murder, forcing me to vacillate between sexual tension and disgusted horror. As the first woman cries out in orgasm, we immediately see her friend crumple to the basement floor in a river of blood. Ultimately we see the young woman bound to a clothesline, a gag in her mouth, blood jelling underneath her nose.

Had I ventured, out of my belief that as feminists we need to know what's going on, into a sleazy theatre on the outskirts of town? No. I was in my living room at 7:30 pm. on Saturday evening, watching along with an estimated two million other Americans (many of them children), Home Box Office TV.

The *New York Times* reported on a study which concluded that "violence against women depicted in pornography films may lead to criminal behaviour. The new research demonstrates that pornography portraying sex in combination with violence does in fact contribute to an individual's tendency toward

aggression, while non-violence erotica apparently does not" (NYTimes 9/30/80).

From Wednesday May 6 through Friday May 8, a three-day series entitled 'The Feminist Case Against Porno-



graphy' plans to address itself to just such messages. The series is being sponsored by Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media, a Northampton-based group begun this year in response to the increasing saturation of the mass media with violent and degrading images of women. Following is an interview I did recently with Elizabeth Dworin, one of

the organizers of the series.

Ellen LaFleche: Many women have intuitively felt that these images lead to actual violence in our lives, but can't come up with statistics to prove it. What is WAVPM's perspective on this?



Elizabeth Dworin: We're very strong in taking the position that, regardless of porn's actual causal relationship to violence, that it is, itself, a form of violence. It's written and visual material that wages a psychological assault on women's right to determine our own body images, sexual-turn-ons, values, ethics... Besides, short of attaching electrodes to 90,000

people's brains and monitoring what they did during years of exposure to this stuff, you can't make hard statistics. But with the rape, battery, sexual harassment levels what they are (and their epidemic increase directly parallels the flowering of the hard-core porn industry) there's something really horrendous in flatly denying a connection. I mean, we accept that fact that Nazi propaganda which objectified (and sometimes portrayed the sexual victimization of) Jews in pre-war Germany very much created a cultural climate in which the Final Solution was possible. I get nervous when I see Klan literature, for example, because that's exactly what it's trying to do, make acceptable the idea of a white nation. That's just a first step!

EF: Well, they're really getting on with it-- 23 of the "new wave horror films" as they call them, came out in 1979, and triple that number, 69, were released in 1980. What are the trends that have led WAVPM and similar groups to increased activism?

ED: We're very concerned with the sex/violence message especially with the advent of Cable-Vision and HBO entering people's homes by the thous-

TURN TO P. 13

NEWSBRIEFS

Women Protest NATO Plan

250 West German women and children fought with police April 7 as they demonstrated at NATO's defense ministers' conference for nuclear arms in Bonn.

The women, gathered to oppose NATO's plans to station nuclear missiles in West Germany, beat on pots and pans and shouted, "No rockets!" and "Disarm, disarm" as police tried to prevent them from blocking access to the West German Defense Ministry. Two women were arrested.

Women for Peace and the Democratic Women's Initiative, protesting the 13-nation Nuclear Planning Group, say that they fear the Reagan administration is not genuinely interested in disarmament. The President's national security advisor, Richard Allen, had recently criticized some Europeans for their "out-right pacifist sentiments."

Some 15,000 anti-nuclear protesters had marched to the conference site the previous weekend as ministers including Caspar Weinberger reviewed a 1979 NATO plan to deploy 572 missiles capable of striking the Soviet Union throughout Europe.

Vienna Orchestras Bar Women

Only three major orchestras in the world continue to refuse women's participation, and two of them are in Vienna, Austria.

But if Austria's state secretary Johanna Dohnal has anything to say about it, the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna Symphony will have to change their ways or face a growing barrage of criticism and ridicule.

Dohnal has been campaigning with Vienna's Academy of Music and the Performing Arts to press the orchestras to change by giving an all-female concert from Austria's lesser-known symphonies and setting up panel discussions of women charging the orchestras with discrimination.

Representatives of the accused orchestras deny they are discriminating by suggesting that women do not have the physical stamina for the strict rehearsing and performance schedules. Pregnancy leaves would also disrupt the smooth functioning of the orchestras, they say.

Both organizations legally are private organizations free to set their own regulations.

According to the Academy of Music, the discriminatory policies of the orchestras are discouraging women from continuing their musical educations. Only 16% of Academy's graduates last year were women, although equal numbers of women and men started the eight year course.

Women to Walk for Our Lives

Pioneer Valley women are organizing a local action in support of the Washington, D.C. Mother's Day Action. Women will be walking from Bridge St. School to Pulaski Park in Northampton in an expression of dismay and outrage with military spending and to display positive alternatives to that spending. The peace walk will be a coming together of women, of mothers, of daughters, of sisters who want to promote disarmament and to share a vision of hope and mutual nurturance.

The walk will begin with a mourning ceremony during which women will plant gravestones symbolizing the many ways in which women's lives are being continually damaged by the war



March for Children in Atlanta, Amherst

Photo by Kathy Kirk

machine. On arrival at the park there will be a group ritual, celebration and apple pie. Children are encouraged to walk and to share in the sending off of balloons (BLOW UP BALLOONS NOT PEOPLE). There will be music, clowns and puppet shows for children and adults as well as information sharing on how women and women's programs are being affected by the budget cuts and military spending. An apple pie bakein is being planned for the morning of the walk.

We see this walk as one way for women to stand together and demand that the federal budget "pie" be divided up more in the interest of people and less in the interest of war.

Men who want to show support for this action are invited to bring baked apple pies to the park and to volunteer to do childcare.

To participate in the bakein call
Elinor: 5864009

Sarah: 6653478 or

For more info. call Marguerite: 268-3142 or Pat: 5844218

A University of Minnesota microbiologist has identified a strain of bacteria linked to toxic shock syndrome. It is believed that the discovery could help doctors in diagnosing and quickly treating the potentially lethal disease - often associated with tampon use.

Doctor Patrick Schlievert says he has identified a strain of bacteria that produces toxic shock syndrome in rabbits as having been present in scores of women who have suffered from the syndrome.

It is believed that staphylococcus aureus, a very common bacterium causes toxic shock. However, this newest research indicates that the staph bacteria found in women who had toxic shock also contained two proteins not present in most staph infection cases. The serious problem with toxic shock is that doctors really did not know how to identify and treat it early enough. Schlievert says his study suggests that doctors may be able to treat toxic shock early with gamma globulin.

Nuclear Weapons Freeze OKed in Mass.

The Mass. Senate and House voted in favor of the bilateral Nuclear Weapon Freeze Resolution April 16. The Resolution calls for the president to propose to the Soviet Union a halting immediately of the testing, production and deploy-

ment of all nuclear weapons. It asks that money saved by the freeze be transferred to civilian use.

In written testimony before the committee, former Deputy of the CIA Herbert Scoville said "The new proposed American MX missile system and the Soviet large, accurate ICBM's can only create incentives for both sides to launch a preemptive nuclear attack in a time of crisis. Now is the time for a bold step by the US to break this chain reaction and seek a mutual halt to the procurement of additional and more dangerous weapons."

The National Women's Political Caucus has opened a Western Mass. Regional Office at 25 Main St. No. 204, Northampton. A grass-roots organization operating in 50 states, they are the practical politicians of the women's movement. They promote women in political process by recruiting and advising women candidates for offices at every level of government. They also train campaign workers and work with the NWPC Campaign Support Committee which raises money and contributes to feminist's campaigns. The NWPC brings together women of every age, race, lifestyle and cultural background.

The NWPC's Western Mass office had been established to accomplish the Caucus' major objective-- National Ratification of the ERA.

The Wildlife Society recently published results from its 1977-1978 survey of women and ethnic minorities in degree programs entering wildlife professions, the first survey of its kind ever made.

Women comprise nearly 25% of the total wildlife studies enrollment. A quarter of these are aiming for bachelor's degrees, while 20% plan Master's, and 10% PhD's.

If, as suggested by comparison, these statistics parallel medical school enrollments, there has been a 20% increase over the last decade of women in wildlife studies.

In disciplines closely related to wildlife, nearly twice as many women were enrolled in less science-oriented curricula such as conservation education, outdoor recreation and parks, and natural resources than in more science-oriented programs such as wildlife, fisheries, and forestry. Ethnic minority women were enrolled in more science-oriented curricula than was reported for all women.

Birthing Chair

Childbirth in a squatting or sitting position has been the norm throughout most historical time periods and in

nearly every culture. In fact, women in many cultures used specially designed (and sometimes decorated or bejeweled) chairs or stools for birthing. Ancient Greek women, for example used a special birthing chair with a crescent shaped opening for the baby to slide through.

But as doctors suppressed the work of midwives around the eighteenth century women were encouraged, and sometimes forced to undergo labor and delivery in a supine position. Traditional medical explanation for giving birth flat on one's back? It's easier for the doctor to see what's going on and it is easier to maneuver forceps. And as childbirthing technologies such as fetal monitors became popular in the 1970's, the lying down position became even more "medically necessary." With a fetal monitor, a woman is strapped to the machine and cannot move around or get up.

But the supine position for childbirth leads to more medical complications and diminishes a woman's control over the experience. It may actually increase labor time because the laboring woman must fight the downward force of gravity to expell the baby.

A new modern "birthing chair" is being introduced in the American hospitals. About 185 of these chairs from one manufacturer in Nebraska have been sold to hospitals here and overseas. The birthing chair is made from durable plastic, comes equipped with adjustable footrests and knee supports and is motorized (like a dentist's chair) so that it can be tilted, lowered or raised to meet the woman's needs during labor and delivery.

Natural advantages to the sitting up position offered by this chair include the fact that gravity will augment a woman's uterine contractions; this will usually decrease the time spend in labour. In many cases, sitting up also relieves strain on the heart, allows the woman freedom of movement and may decrease the risk of blood clots in the leg. It also gives much more psychological freedom to women who are in a physically vulnerable position while lying flat on their back with feet in stirrups!

Whether or not the birthing chair will be used to enhance women's control of the birthing process remains to be seen. Some doctors are already objecting to the chair on the basis that it allows less room for their forceps manipulation. But, according to Newsweek magazine, (March 2, 1981) acceptance of the new chair is increasing among medical professionals.



The article on the Women's Pentagon Action meeting in the newsbrief section of last month's *WVW* was erroneously attributed to Elizabeth. The author of the article is Dieder McLaughlin.

HLA Threat Woman Fights Back

An attorney with the center for Constitutional rights in New York City is warning that a Human Life Amendment could threaten the quality of even routine gynecological care for women throughout the United States.

Rhonda Copelin is one of the lawyers who argued the McCrae Medicaid funding case before the supreme court.

She claims that if a human life amendment were passed making abortions illegal many women might seek illegal or self-induced abortions.

She reports, however, that there is a 15-25 percent miscarriage rate in the United States, and even those women may be in serious trouble if the human Life Amendment passes. She explains that many of those women may require emergency care, and discover it difficult to find a doctor who believes the miscarriage was truly spontaneous and not self-induced.

Copelin says under the Human Life Amendment, the common dilation and curettage procedure—which is sometimes needed by women who have incompletely miscarried—might be undertaken at legal peril to both doctor and patients. This is because it would be difficult to determine whether miscarriages or spontaneous abortions were induced or natural, the lawyer said.

Paul Brown, director of the Life Amendment Political Action Committee however, is disputing Copelin's claim. He insists that a Human Life Amendment would not inhibit a woman's right to such needed medical care, adding it is not the committee's intent "To make a police state out of pregnancy."

HerSay

Reagonomics

Reagonomics calls for deep cuts in the budgets of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The NEA Literature Program, which only accounts for a small portion of the NEA budget may be hit harder than those programs with powerful lobbying machinery at their disposal. If that happens, every public literature program, innumerable small presses and little magazines, as well as individual creative writers would be dealt a heavy blow.

Send a letter to the president or your representative indicating your support of the arts and disagreement with Reagan's budget cuts.



Opening Celebration of the Women's Community Action Center at 160 Main St. N'ton
Photo by Debbie Dugan

Women's Media Conference

"Planning a National and International Communications System for Women" was the topic of a conference held in Washington, D.C. over the weekend of April 4-5 given by the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press. Women caucused on the UN End-of-Decade Conference for Women to be held in Nairobi in 1985. Coverage of the conference was discussed as well as furthering organizing of women between now and 1985.

80 women, some from France, Jamaica, Greece, Norway, Sweden and New Zealand, some from women's organizations and the feminist press, some from the mass media. Workshops were given in Media Education, Women's Cable TV, International Communications, Feminist Media, and New Technologies. Proceedings will be printed by Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 3306 Ross Place, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008 or call (202) 363-0812.

Threat to Daycare

The University Day School, the largest of four campus day care centers, is in danger of annihilation at the hands of university policies.

The only rent-free day care facility on campus, originally donated by the 4-H organization, the center is run by the school of education. Many parents using the facility are dissatisfied with SOE management and have asked for a transfer of administration to the office of residential life. This request originally came with the blessings of the school of

Education. However, since that original recommendation, there has been talk of school of Ed. reconstruction plans.

With a waiting list of approximately 150 families for campus day care, it is clear that there will be great community concern if plans to transform the day care center into a teaching lab materialize.

The Coalition for Campus Child Care asks all interested individuals to contact them:

Pam Collins 253-9377
Lance Hodes 549-1863
Sharon Dombeck 253-3923

Fashion and Young Women

Young women attach little significance to behavior, clothing and social settings that young men see as provocative. This is according to a new study by University of California researcher Jacqueline Goodchilds. Goodchilds and her associates say they surveyed 432 adolescents on their attitudes towards dress and certain types of social behavior.

The researchers say they found that young men consistently believed that women's clothing and actions were meant to be provocative, while women believed they were simply keeping pace with contemporary styles of dress and behavior.

Researcher Goodchilds says these findings are contrary to what they expected to discover in adolescents of the 1980's.

After many hours of meetings with many women, Wendy Axel has decided to cancel the East Coast Women's Music Festival. We hope to print a letter about this next month.

Labor, women's and antiracist groups in Cincinnati are planning a series of benefits to support a Black woman - facing voluntary manslaughter charges for defending herself against racist and sexist attacks.

Anna Small, a 48-year-old Black woman, is charged with the shooting death of Clyde Henson, 27, her next door neighbor. Small has lived in the Fairmount area for 10 years; all the while putting up with harassment from her largely all-white neighbors. Henson, in particular had been especially abusive. He had made open threats, blocked Small's driveway, drove nails into her tires, poured gasoline around her house, thrown things against the house, upset garbage cans, littered Small's yard and drove cars over her lawn.

Significantly, Henson's home had been the meeting place over the years of robed Ku Klux Klansmen.

Small, however, had not been able to get adequate police protection. In one court case, the judge refused to allow a fireman and a reporter to testify to their knowledge of gasoline spread around the house, and dismissed the case.

On Saturday night, Jan. 24, police were called when gasoline was smelled around Small's house. They found an empty gas can on Henson's porch, but made no arrest. The next day, Henson and five or six other white men were playing football on Small's lawn, throwing the ball against her house and using abusive language. When Small called on them to leave, they became more abusive, and Henson came into the house, threatening her.

Small then pointed a gun at Henson asked him to leave. He continued to threaten her and advanced further into the house, making karate feints toward her. She then shot, striking Henson in the neck, and fled to another neighbor's house, where she was arrested. Henson died a week later.

"Ms. Small's case," reads a statement by the Annie Small Defense Fund, "is typical and reflective of the plight of untold Black and poor struggling women today in this country who must live under oppressive conditions and suffer the indignities of a system not yet able or willing to grant equal rights and protection to defenseless women or to champion the cause of the poor."

To donate, write: The Anna Small Defense Fund, PO Box 29334, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45229.

Collective Statement

Our special thanks to the Resource/Referral Task Force at Everywoman's Center:

Virginia Ackerman, Jackie Baillargeon, Anna Berdick, Cindy Gray, Cecy Henderson, Roo Hooke, Jill Hurst, Di Kegels, Debbie Kehne, Helen McDonald, Melanie Miller, Kate Neilson, Diana Pedulla

The Valley Women's Voice can be reached by mail or telephone at the Everywoman's Center, UMass, Amherst 01003 (545-0883) 12:30-2 Mon. and 3-6 Weds. & Fri. (On Fri., call 545-0913 after 4 pm.)

SUBMISSIONS: Try to keep articles under 5 pages, double-spaced, please! We can't guarantee we will print all submissions; this decision is collectively made. Submissions accompanied by a SASE will be returned within three months. Due to space limitations, we sometimes have to postpone publication of articles. All major editorial changes are made in conjunction with the author. Any questions or ideas? Call 545-0883.

CALENDAR: All calendar and announcement listings are free. For more information, call 545-0883.

LETTERS: We love to hear from you but please keep your letters under 2 pages, double spaced and typed. Thanks!

COLLECTIVE: Michaelann, Maureen Carey, Mary Kate Hogan, Marcia Black, Kathleen Moran, Iris Young, Ellen LaFleche, Mary Kenny, Laura McDonald, Fran Schwartzberg, Toby Schermerhorn, Heather Johnson, Sarah Van Arsdale.

DISTRIBUTION TASK GROUP: Coordinator: Fran, Michelle Dileo, Michaelann, Laura, Linda Shaw, Robin, Meg, Jean & the Hegire Women's Forum, Jean Antil, Kim Kramer, Sarah Darling, Carol, Amy, Peggy Conant, Joyce Sunydar, Sally Mueller, Michelle Joseph.

PRODUCTION COORDINATORS: Maureen, Toby, Fran, Mary Kate, Sarah, Amy, Jenness, Delia LaBonte, Gayle Carey, Carol Schwartz, Michaelann, Patty, Kathy Daniels, Karen Fibiger, Pat Hadley, Ann Bolger, Catherine Jennings.

GRAPHICS TASK GROUP: Coordinators: Carey Caccava, Susan Lindeman, Fran, Delia, Jackie Sperry.

PHOTOGRAPHY TASK GROUP: Coordinator: Cathy Collins, Kathy Kirk, Wren Withers, Amy Jenness.

EDITORIAL TASK GROUP: Coordinator: Michaelann, Marcia, Iris Young, Heather, Ellen, Kathleen, Sarah, Kathryn, Ann Bolger, Amy, Delia, Patty McGill, Karen, Rachel, Carol.

ADMINISTRATIVE TASK GROUP: Kathleen Moran, Ann, Laura, Maureen, Michaelann.





Letters



Dear VWV,

We would like to extend an open invitation to all women to participate in the Walk For Our Lives, Saturday, May 9, 1:00 pm.

The walk was organized by a small group of concerned women in the Pioneer Valley who wanted to show support for the Washington D.C. Mother's Day Action but who either chose not to go or who were unable to go to Washington. We have been holding open meetings to organize the walk and to participate in making leaflets, posters, banners. By the time the VWV goes to press most of the work will hopefully be done but there will still be an opportunity for women to participate in the apple pie bake-in Sat. morning and to walk and celebrate our unity in the afternoon.

This action is an attempt to bring together women from many different spheres in life to stand in solidarity expressing how our individual and collective lives are hurt by the oppressive nature of war. Please walk in the street with us to save our lives.

Sincerely,

The Organizing Committee of
"A Walk For Our Lives"

Dear VWV,

We of the Valley Lesbian Alliance were very upset to see the flyer that Womonyre passed out at the Alive/Terry Garthwaite concert April 11. The flyer begins to divide the community in yet another way-- feeding into the patriarchy.

We understand that there are many issues involved with regard to Jill and Kiriyo's feelings about concert record sales. However, if the distributor, a woman, does not sell at concerts, who will? If Womonyre, a bookstore with records as a sideline gets exclusive rights, who is to say that Platterpus, Main St. Records and For The Record, all record stores owned by males couldn't claim discrimination? They also sell women's music and we could end up with male record sellers at women's concerts!

Unfortunately, most women-owned businesses are marginal including that of Women's Music Distribution. One of several points that Audre Lorde made within her keynote address on "Race, Sex and Class" April 12 at Hampshire College is pertinent here. If we in the women's community begin fighting each other, we allow the patriarchy to sit back and laugh as we do their work for them, resulting in the demise of women's businesses.

Our intention is not to further divide the women's community. Certainly this has already been created by such incidents as the flyers at the concert and the fiasco known as the East Coast Women's Music Festival. We as Valley women are fortunate to have each other and Womonyre as an important part of our lives. Let us not fight among ourselves but rather let us join together to continue to build a strong women's community.

Valley Lesbian Alliance

Dear VWV,

Although I appreciated the perspective and the general intelligence of Elizabeth Dworan's review of *Take Back the Night*, I feel compelled to take issue with one small part of it. I hope when I have stated my case, my reasons for writing to protest will make sense to you.

Dworan quotes approvingly the remark by Susan Brownmiller that the defense of civil liberties of Nazis "is a self-righteous and not particularly courageous stand, for American Jewry is not currently threatened." Both aspects of this statement are inaccurate. In the first place, assaults on Jews and Jewish institutions have increased at an alarming rate in the past couple of years, not only in the United States but throughout Europe. The recent upsurge in Ku Klux Klan activities is threatening to Jews as well as blacks. Dworan or her editors should have known this.

In the second place, to assume that defending the civil liberties of Nazis is not dangerous is a terrible mistake. I speak of this with some passion, since relatives of mine discovered what happens when you operate on the assumption that the first amendment means what it says. A relative of mine, a male, a Protestant lawyer in Chicago, was a member of the defense team that defended the right of the Nazis to hold a march in Skokie, Illinois. The other principle member of the defense team was a Jewish ACLU lawyer. My relative was asked to participate in the defense because he was well-respected in the area as well as a defender of the civil rights of children.

These men were in genuine danger from the day their names appeared as being associated with the defense of Nazis. The Jewish lawyer's home was firebombed. His children were persecuted; his wife assaulted. My relative found himself the recipient of threatening notes and phone calls; his family was harassed. Both men were completely snubbed by former friends and associates. While they defended the scum of the earth because under our system, everyone has the right to a defense, no one would defend their right to take the Constitution at face value. It was not long after that case was concluded that my relative left Chicago; life has simply become too dangerous for him there. But far from being self-righteous about what he had done, he and his family were shocked and amazed. They had-- mistakenly, it seems-- assumed that most people would agree that "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

The implications of this are clear for feminists. The distaste at and misunderstanding of the feminist position on pornography has put a severe burden of proof on feminism. To take that disastrous prosecutorial turn at this point would not only elevate pornography to political speech, but could do serious damage to feminist publications through a "hoist with your own petard" effect. I have argued frequently with prosecutorial anti-pornography women that every court challenge against *Playboy* (or worse) creates a precedent for suppression that the Moral Majority and their cohorts would be happy to use against *Our Bodies Our Selves*, *Rubyfruit Jungle* or any other piece of literature that bothers them. The right of feminists to assemble peacefully could be equally endangered.

The way that we prevent that is through the thorough, if distasteful, support of constitutional rights for all. If

lawyers who take cases for Nazis cannot find support among us, where will we find lawyers to support us when push comes to shove? We may imagine that the rightness of our cause guarantees us that someone will come along to help, but that's a bloody weak position to be relying on in these times. Better to take the libertarian position, guarantee free speech to all, and put our efforts into that educational campaign we keep talking about, but never quite seem to pull off.

Best Wishes,
B.L. Alexander

Dear VWV,

I am writing this letter in response to a protest flyer that was distributed by Womonyre Books, April 11th, at the Alive/Terry Garthwaite concert at Mt. Holyoke College. For those of you who did not attend or read the flyer, it objected to the Women's Music distribution network, and the policies within. Included in these policies is one that allows for only the record distributor to sell records at concerts. Womonyre objects to this, claiming it is unfair competition, that smaller and Third World Women's labels are not represented, that prices are unfair, and that the money does not support Women's business. Their flyer asked Women not to buy records from me, at concerts, for these reasons. It worked and it had a personally and financially devastating effect on me. It was also very upsetting for me to realize that so many Women made a decision not to come near my record table based on a slanted flyer that presented only one side of the story.

I ask you now to hear my side, and then to decide where and when to purchase your records.

I began spreading the word about Women's Music in New England communities a year and a half ago. The Women owned and operated company by which I am employed, "Women's Music Distribution Company," has been in operation for seven years. It began with the selling of the first Olivia 45 and today distributes a host of albums by many different Women artists, inclusive of Third World Women and smaller Women's labels. This company, however, has remained a marginal business, showing NO profit.

The Women's distribution system was set up to ensure the economic survival of the women involved. As it exists today, the United States and Europe are divided into regions, with certain Women owned and operated companies covering specific and exclusive territories. The companies respect each others' areas and will not sell records in them. This way we do not compete with each other, but this also means that Womonyre cannot purchase records from anyone else, even if their price is lower. The reason for these exclusive areas are 1.) to establish an alternative to the male dominated music industry; 2.) to allow Women distributors to work together in a supportive, noncompetitive atmosphere; 3.) to ensure the economic survival of the businesses involved by guaranteeing us the business of all of the record outlets in our areas.

How and Why does the Women's Music record distributor have exclusive rights to sell at concerts? The only concerts that I have exclusive rights at are Those concerts whose records are sold to me by Women owned and operated companies, and are not available to male owned companies. In these cases it is written into the contract the artist has with her producer that only the local

distributor be allowed to sell. These concert sales serve many purposes to me. It is an opportunity for me to have contact with Women from the various communities I service, to get valuable feedback regarding availability of records and to find out how Women are treated in the mainstream outlets, how people feel about a particular artist, album, and media coverage, etc. This is all information which enables me to service the Women's communities of New England. I also use concerts to better familiarize myself with the artists whom I represent, and to pass on information about concerts in other areas.

Contrary to what Womonyre's flyer would have you believe, I do not make a huge profit from concert sales, but take in just enough money to keep this business alive! I also have an agreement with them to offer records at a price equal to or above what Womonyre charges at their store. This prevents me from being unfair competition, and is done as an acknowledgement of and respect for Feminist outlets.

Jill and Kiriyo, owners of the bookstore, also complained that availability is limited, and that I sometimes don't give them all the records they order. This happens to everyone and is a reality of the record business, one that Womonyre has been unable to accept or believe. It is true that on occasion I have only given them part of an order, but this is done because I have a limited number, and must also get records to Women in other areas. Would Jill and Kiriyo want me to give them 100 records and the Women in Maine none?

Finally I would like to point out that if concert sales were opened up to local bookstores, then all of the male owned record stores in those areas would want to sell as well. Do we want them to sell too?

Womonyre suggests in the flyer that we should all stick to our own ends of our business, and this is just what I am doing by selling records. That is my business! Books is theirs.

Jill Krolik and Kiriyo Spooner have caused me great harm and humiliation by distributing a flyer that totally misrepresents what the Women's Music Distribution Co. is all about. They have tarnished my reputation, and have convinced many people not to support this Woman run and owned business. This is exactly what they had intended to accomplish, so their attack was a success. To me the entire situation is an absolute disgrace! For an establishment that claims to be a Feminist business to conduct itself in such a manner is an hypocrisy! I regret that the conflict has gotten to this point, and that the numerous discussions I DID have with Womonyre seemed to be of no consequence.

In closing let me say thank you to the many Women from all over New England who offered me the benefit of the doubt, and their support also to Variations Productions for the opportunity to attend such an event, and especially to the hundreds of Women who have bought records from me, helping to keep this company alive! I welcome letters, phone calls, and general discussion around this issue.

Sincerely,

Trish Karlinski
P.O. Box 85, Cambridge, MA. 02140
(617) 661-0554

A Lesbian Mother Speaks

Interview by Sarah Van Arsdale with Trina

Could you describe what it is like for you to be a lesbian mother?

Well, there are two ways to look at that: one is by comparison with other Lesbians in the straight society and the other is by comparison to straight mothers in the straight society. By comparison with other Lesbians I would have to say that I am privileged. Having a child makes it possible to get welfare here in Mass. which is not available to Lesbians. I can get a housing subsidy, in Ceta jobs I was considered a targeted population, I can file Head of Household on my income taxes which gives me a tax break, AFDC covers all of the medical expenses for me and my daughter and has a work incentive built into it in which I can work and still continue to receive some or all of my AFDC grant depending on how much I earn, and I can file for Earned Income Credit on my Federal income taxes so that, depending on how much I've earned, the government will send me money in addition to returning all my taxes. In addition, when I walked down the street or went shopping with my daughter when she was littler, (and my lover, Linda, found this to be true for her as well) I was treated more politely and courteously than when outside of my mother role when I am just another dyke-queer. I don't know if I'm assumed to be straight, or if I'm thought "better" than other Lesbians because I've obviously been with a man sexually. (This is assuming that they've not thought of parthenogenesis.)

On the other hand, by comparison with straight mothers in this society, we Lesbian mothers have to live with the very real threat and knowledge that we have no right to our children in this society, that they can be taken from us simply because we are Lesbians, either by an ex-husband, or father, or grandparents or by government intervention if a neighbor or teacher reports my Lesbianism to Children and Protective Services, and they decide that my Lesbianism makes me an unfit mother.

Would you tell us about the custody case you fought?

When my daughter was ten years old, her father came to Massachusetts from Illinois to fight for custody of my daughter on the grounds that I was a Lesbian. (It had already been mutually agreed to by my son and me and his father that my son be in his father's custody.) I fought the case as an out of the closet Lesbian. After three full days of voluminous positive testimony on my behalf and no testimony on the father's behalf, the judge ordered my daughter placed in the legal custody of her father and that she be taken from the courtroom without being allowed even to go home to collect her things.

A deep and later to be empowering psychic rage overtook me that I was treated as if I possessed none of the mothering or even simply human qualities that a straight woman would be graced with and that my daughter was treated with such little regard for the kind of intense, dependent, almost monogamous relationship we had with each other. I grabbed her and ran out of the courtroom. Linda ran too and the police and other "good citizens" caught us and ripped us apart and took my daughter screaming to the airport.

Three days later she ran away from her father's house and found her way back to Mass. I still do not have legal custody of my daughter. Her father has legal custody. The reason she lives with me in Mass. is because a brilliant woman

I can understand why a Lesbian would want to have a child because of how close we as Lesbians are to birth and creation and actualizing and materializing life and life forms. And since we are not around men (at least in our own homes) who are the abusers of power and women and children, we have all that room in our minds and bodies and spirits to be inventive and expansive. But to me, having a child is the least creative way to give birth and offers the least possibility of expansion. We as Lesbians do have a lot to offer children by our very power and perspective in and on the world. Our kids are exposed to thoughts and ideas that only someone who is an outsider by choice can give them. On the other hand, though, that situation makes life ardously difficult for

daughter of Lesbians and she and I have spoken about it at great length. It was really difficult for her in school and in the neighborhood to be the daughter of Lesbians. Whereas I alone in the world with her was graced with some meager privilege, me and my lover with her touched off a lot of hatred and fear. One Lesbian alone is tolerable. Two lesbians together with a child was not. The peer group pressure that was antagonistic to Lesbianism made it very hard for her. Children really do need to blend in, to be accepted by their peers. But the whole system of enforced schooling in this society teaches straight, christian values with a purpose and a vengeance. And teachers, and other kids, and other kids' parents were not so accepting of a Lesbian life-style, of course. And since Linda and I were so visible at school and in the neighborhood, my daughter was queer-baited constantly. And it tended to make my daughter resent me and Linda for being so open about our Lesbianism. Of course, me and Linda could have chosen to be less visible which brings me back to that original choice of sometimes having to give up who you are for the "good" of the child.

Did your daughter ever want to go live with her father?

That's the interesting part. No, she didn't. In the face of all the problems, she still did not want to live with him even though that would have been the easiest thing for her to do. She developed the strength that enables her to continue living with me/us.

Do you think that Lesbians are motivated only by positive reasons for wanting to have a child?

Well, this is a touchy subject but here I go. No, I don't think that any woman is wholly motivated by positive reasons for wanting to have a child. As I said before, it is an easy way to be creative and often can let you off the hook from finding other ways to give birth. If I didn't want to I didn't have to give any life to myself, because the value of having given life to her was so overstated. It can give a woman a false sense of security in the role of being a mother, of believing that here is a loving being that has to love you unconditionally.

Sometimes I think we use our children to regain our own childhoods and grow ourselves up through them in the way we were not allowed to when we were young and in so doing invalidate their own uniqueness. And finally, in this patriarchal society a woman is not graced with any kind of power over anybody...except over her children. So

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constitutional lawyer argued in a Federal court that my daughter's rights were violated because she had been given no representation in the court.

So a stay of the probate order was enforced which could be broken only if the father continued to pursue the issue, which he did not. This experience showed me very clearly that my rights as a Lesbian/mother were totally invalidated and that even a child has more rights in this society than a Lesbian.

What do you think of Lesbians who want to have, or do have, children after they've come out?

both the mother and the children. From the mother's point of view I would say that I really believe that children require a kind of attention from the women who take care of them that is all-consuming. Children need the women around them to change as little as possible so they can have a stable base from which to branch out and try out and bang up against. Any growth or change on the part of the mother/mothers causes a disruption in the child's concentration on her world. And do you have any idea of your daughter's point of view?

Yes. I witnessed her experience as the

Dear Womyn of the Valley,

Last November a Chicago Aradian mentioned to Grand River Aradians that the New Alexandria Library for Lesbians, located originally in Chicago but now in Worthington MA was undergoing a transition, that the womyn who had devoted eight years to her were separating from each other and wishing to find other womyn to take responsibility for and custody of her. They were especially interested in having her return to the Midwest (since she had originated here and contains much material from the Great Lakes area, particularly Chicago).

Aradia is a world-wide community with the largest number of us living in the Grand River Valley and Hills in Michigan. Grand River area Aradians agreed among ourselves that we wanted to put time, energy, money and space into the New Alexandria Library for Lesbians. The Library contains works of art, posters, t-shirts, buttons, records, tapes, approximately 250 publications

(some complete and some partial sets), approximately 1500 books, regional files, shelves, furniture, announcements, organizations' papers and other valuable documents by and about Lesbians. She has been (prior to being packed away for several months) most recently operated as an archives (non-circulating).

Through letters and phone calls among several of us and Betty Birdfish the woman taking decision-making responsibility for the future of the Library, an agreement was reached that Aradia would move the library to Grand Rapids, MI, and do the tremendous amount of work necessary to catch up the cataloging and other tasks needed to get her reshelfed and available once again to Lesbians (with the help of several Aradians trained in library work as well as many Aradians willing to do the tedious clerical work).

In March 04 (1981 christian time) 1 Workwommin went to Worthington to learn about the Library and to bring her to Grand Rapids. She went with Arad-

ian money, support and blessings. While she was there, Betty Birdfish came to a realization that she wishes to continue her work with the Library and decided not to "give" her to Aradia after all. It was a traumatic time for Ann, Betty, and other valley (MA) womyn involved in the process and for we Aradians here in this Valley (MI) who were eagerly, excitedly awaiting the arrival of The Library.

Our disappointment here that we will not be caretakers for The Library in the way we had envisioned (we felt and feel we have invaluable resources to offer her: property, life-time commitments to this geographic area, money, energy, skills, time, numbers (to prevent burn-out), close geographical proximity to the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival so as to increase accessibility for her, well-established decision-making process and structure, etc.) is too deep to measure. The only consolation and healing of that hurt, anger, grief we're feeling is knowing you all there undoubtedly will help us with our healing by helping us get the

Library open and accessible to us (Lesbian) once again (our main concern).

Ann tells us that many womyn there were, when she visited, unaware of The Library's existence. We, the Aradians at the last meeting of the Hypatia (library workers) sub task force of the Alice Paul (education and research) task force of Aradia decided to write this letter to you and send it to the Lesbian page of the Valley Women's Voice and publish it for all Aradians in *Otherviews* so that you will be aware and will help in whatever way you can. We see The Library as part of us as we are part of all of you and you of all of us.

Love,
Susan Wiseheart for Hypatia
sub task force and the board
of directors of Aradia

Aradia: P.O. Box 7516, Grand Rapids MI 49510.

New Alexandria Library: P.O. Box 111, Huntingdon, MA 01090.

Mayshrines

by Dale LaBonte



"Tis the month of Our Mother, the blessed and beautiful days." The phrase still sings in my mind; my mother's voice hums the rest of the song, but no more of the lyrics. An off-key singer and a harried mother, she taught me parts of songs and parts of her Catholic childhood. In the Yankee town we lived in, there was no Roman Church just down the street as there had been where she grew up. So our version of Catholic devotions were makeshift and original.

The woods behind our house were beautiful and wild. I spent hours there, some joyful or serene, others lonely and bitter. But in May, with the trees leafing out and the flowers opening with strange shapes and scents, the woods were special.

Four of us children would run into the woods in search of flowers. Careful to cut off the flowers without damaging the plants, we followed our daily schooling to respect wild things. We would decorate miniature alters with our treasures, devoted not to a male god, but to Mother Mary.

I certainly felt more like a pagan than a christian, in the warm May weather. Wearing the perfume of earth and blossoms on my skin I would dance gaily along narrow paths. And while the peepers trilled their songs at night, I would pray, "Hail, Mary, full of grace, blessed art thou, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Swathed in moonlight or dazzled by starlight, I felt the prayer for mothering breathed by Catholic women all over the world. "Pray for us now and at the hour of our deaths."



Only recently I came to know some of the significance of our Maytide ritual. Our symbols were a little awry. The moon that represented the Mother/Goddess was fastened to our statue's head--the halo cocked like a pillbox hat. Not the matron or the crone aspect of the goddess, our Mary, robed in blue, was definitely the maiden. And the serpent being crushed beneath this virgin's feet had in other times been a sacred beast. All that detail escaped us. What mattered was the faithfulness of our devotion, and the reassurance we took from it. Three daughters and an unhappy

mother shared the need for nurturing. In a male religion, in a male world, our celebration of the female principle continued as tender and vital as spring. ☐



graphic by Dale LaBonte

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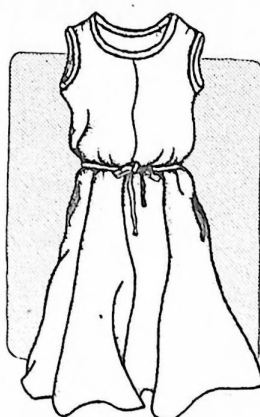
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"Just For Kids" Opens

by Kathleen Moran

The shop is spacious and gracefully arranged. The children's clothing is not arbitrarily placed in "boys" and "girls" racks, but hung under departments like INFANTS, SHORTS and BROKEN-IN-JEANS. The prices are more than reasonable, they are incredible, and the items are as good as new. Past the cash register is a carpeted play area for kids with a crawl through slide toy, books and giant LEGOS. Tucked in a corner (near the broken-in shoes) sits a bench for nursing mothers, and a changing table complete with emergency diapers and diaper wipes.

Cash register and play area? You might ask if these two things aren't mutually exclusive. Not so! say Nancy Nutting and Joan Borgas, the owners of Just Kids' Stuff. As a matter of fact, these two working mothers have made comfort and consideration for their special customers a priority.

After a long association in the Cloverdale Cooperative Nursery School, Nancy and Joan found that they worked well together. So, after Joan left her post as Head Teacher of the school, and Nancy's children grew out of nursery school, she resigned as Parent President of the Board, they looked for something to do together. Plans for Just Kids' Stuff have been percolating between them for over a year.

"We enjoy problem solving," says Nancy, and it shows in their deliberate and painstaking starting up of the store.

They began by wondering if there was enough used inventory to allow them to offer a wide range of "like new" articles—consisting of baby furniture, toys, shoes, books, as well as all sizes and styles of children's clothes. A minimum amount of advertising in local papers overwhelmed them with phone calls at all hours, assuring them that they did indeed have the basis for a shop—plenty of used kids' stuff was available. They embarked on a careful journey through the annals of the Small Business Administration, to various advisors and banks, to landlords all over Northampton, until



Photo by Cathy Collins

Co-Owner, Nancy Nutting of Just Kids' Stuff

they found their current delightful and handicapped-accessible space.

From the feedback questionnaire which they give to all the people that they buy from, to their outreach to the Hispanic population (Joan speaks Spanish) to their decision to have all clothing hung accessibly instead of in bins which

are time-consuming to go through, Joan Borgas and Nancy Nutting are saying to the community, "We care, we've been through it ourselves, and we've designed our shop for you!"

Just Kids' Stuff is located at 131 King St., Northampton. ☐

Motherhood Support and Training

by Ann Bolger

The process of labor and delivery is universal to all mothers everywhere. As women giving birth, we are connected through time and space to all other women who have ever given birth. Rather than being ordinary, birth is a profound experience, one worthy of respect.

Preparation is important for women who choose to become pregnant. Through learning about labor, childbirth and becoming a parent, women can be more in control of the type of birthing experience they want.

The Pioneer Valley Childbirth Education Association (PVCEA) began 16 years ago with just a few Lamaze instructors and has evolved into a parent directed organization much expanded from the original efforts of the organizers. Today, the PVCEA also coordinates Mother/Baby Support Groups, a Caesarean Section Support Group, and has been instrumental in the recent creation

of a Birthing Room at Cooley Dickinson Hospital, where fathers and other coaches are now welcome to participate in the birthing process.

There are presently 11 Lamaze trained instructors in the PVCEA, who train over 700 pregnant women and their coaches yearly. Most women who deliver at Cooley Dickinson have attended PVCEA classes, although women also use Wesson and Franklin County Hospitals. Many women who are preparing for home births also attend classes.

"Lamaze is an interesting political movement," says Meg Simon, PVCEA instructor. "It's a consumer thing, parents want more control over how their babies are born—that's really important. And (the parents) for the most part are very determined people."

The PVCEA offers a series of seven night-time classes for first time Lamaze parents. Single women also attend. Anyone can work with a woman and be her coach. "Grandmothers are the neatest coaches," Meg says. "They're incred-

ibly valuable members of the class."

Both parents participate in Lamaze births and both bond with the baby after birth. The use of little or no medication leads to more alert and better moms and babies.

The classes teach people about the experience of childbirth and the importance of a supportive network between mothers and fathers. A woman and her coach need to build a strong communication system to get through labor. Meg says, "(Labor) is really a stressful time. They need to really be able to understand each other without words—we practice a lot of touch relaxation, where the coach can put his/her hand on the woman's arm and she instantly relaxes."

"Lamaze is not a teaching of techniques but an overcoming of inhibitions. Women learn how to relax, focus and concentrate so they're working with what is natural to their bodies to deliver the baby."

There is no one labor—every one is different—you're not going to have (the

kind of labor) your next door neighbor had."

Education helps eliminate stress for a woman and her coach—if she can use coping techniques to relax, she will have much less fear and tension during labor, and consequently, less pain.

"A lot of labor is sensations and women are terrified. If people aren't trained in what to expect, they don't know what's going on," says Meg.

With the changes brought on by the women's movement in the 60's and the myth of superwoman, many women in the 80's have unrealistic expectations. Some women believe that if they read all the books and study hard, they'll have a short, easy delivery and be back to work in three weeks. Although most births are trouble free, women should be prepared if complications arise.

The fathers' expectations also need to be toned down so they can be part of the

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Thoughts on the New Right and Necessary Abortion

by Kathleen Moran

"My first abortion was a simple medical procedure. I was up and around the next day. My second abortion was different. It was so horrible I told myself-- never again."

My sister's description of her two abortions ran through my mind as I joined the more than 500 people rallying outside the Democratic State Convention in Springfield. We made an impressive circle around the Civic Center. Our chants resounded with less exuberance and more resolve than in any other demonstration I have attended. We seemed to be aware that our opposition was one of the strongest foes that we have ever met.

I was thinking of my sister that day, because it really seemed to me a singular time in our society. Sexual satisfaction is a leading emotional goal in our lives, yet birth control has been less than adequate in keeping up with the sexual mores. So it is not unusual that women have abortions as a means of birth control-- unfortunately causing us to have oftentimes more than one experience with the emotionally draining procedure. I knew what she meant about the second abortion, for I too have suffered a second. Years apart, these "menstrual extractions" were performed so early in pregnancy that the doctors were not even sure I was pregnant. But I was sure.

I don't understand why the second was so devastating. Perhaps it was because I felt that my first was a function of immaturity, and the second was an outgrowth of stupidity. (I had, however, a reason to fear birth control. I could not take the pill and I had lost a daughter and almost lost my life to infection of the Dalkon Shield.) Perhaps it was so horrible because I suspected that I unconsciously (thank you, Freud) wanted a child. And I was also churning with anger, suppressed, of course, at my husband for not sharing this pain and responsibility with me. I was seething that he was able to exist in his totally untouched body throughout our awful time of trying to decide whether or not to keep the baby.

The conception process is interwoven with archaic psychological presets, including religious and fairy tale belief systems that have been bred into us since we played with our dollies. There must be an ancient animal mother/protective instinct which arises in us only when we are pregnant, caused by the increased hormonal flow. Whatever the combination of emotional factors when I left the clinic that horrible day (a clinic to which I had gone secretly,) I determined, like my sister, never again to allow my body to experience the wrenching suction of abortion.

Yet despite the emotional confusion brought on by the abortions, I have to admit to myself that if I were told the fetus I was carrying had defective genes, I would opt for an abortion. Or, if I had perchance been raped, and was carrying the child of a man whom I hated, I would certainly ask for an abortion. Indeed, if questioned whether I would urge my twelve-year old daughter to have a child while she was still in that netherworld of half-comprehension that teenagers inhabit, again I would have to answer that I would allow her to choose abortion.

Which is why I found myself marching, with baby in frontpack and four-year old's hand tucked gravely in mine as we chanted "...the HLA has got to go!" I find myself taking a strong personal anti-abortion stand, yet recognizing the dangers of legislating choice for others. The National Right to Life Association's (NRLA) stand is a radical stand, calling for an end to abortions, family planning, sex education, and a resumption of the nuclear family. Some members of NRLA even advocate an end to

the means of birth control which allows the egg to fertilize but not implant on the uterine wall (including IUDs and the low estrogen birth control pill). When asked what mothers should do about supporting unwanted children, they advocate adoption and legalization of baby selling.

The ironic and painful part of this struggle which although fashioned as a "single issue" fight, has repercussions on all levels of women's freedom, is that many of our "foes" are women. Members of each side find ourselves oddly interweaving with the other, even though we each feel that we are fervently fighting for justice. The Right To Life woman feels it is necessary to justify her lifestyle and belief in traditional values, and in doing so, deny to herself what needs to change in terms of women's treatment in society. The feminist woman, because of her feeling that a woman, being responsible for the children that issue out of her womb, therefore needs to have all possible control over her body, has been forced into a position where she cannot communicate with women who have different values. Despite their "pro-life" beliefs, NRLA women can find themselves going to abortion clinics when unwanted pregnancies occur to children or friends. And pro-choice advocates like myself can find ourselves unable to deny that abortions can have devastating emotional effects.

The feminist movement has always dealt with the realistic aspects of our society. We have pointed out that the nuclear family is not the peaceful haven against the world that pro-family advocates would like us to believe. (30,000 women have entered 18 battered women's shelters in Massachusetts alone in a single year's time.) We accept that, given inadequate and unsafe birth control for women, and an irresponsibility on the part of male lovers, unwanted pregnancies do occur. We realize that pregnancies do occur as a result of incest and rape, a fact that many pro-life advocates seem to deny or side-step. The majority of abortions that have been performed (and there have been more than eight million since 1973) have been requested by women under 21. We know by this that many women make the decision not to bear a child because they are unable to bear the burden, due to lack of emotional support from a mate or lack of money.

Yet these are all realities that anti-abortion women refuse to recognize. We find ourselves now in an odd situation, with legislation (for choice) on the side of the left, the energy of religious fervor on the side of the right, with women facing off women in the center. In a sense, we women have been duped into fighting this fight, which like all factionalism is bound to benefit only the oppressors.

Feminist women find ourselves in a vise, financially and politically, a clenchhold which has been painstakingly engineered by the reactionary males of the New Right. Like a rock under pressure, we find ourselves splintering apart, unable to find the time and patience to deal with our voluntary political work as we scramble for a living. And one of the main tools that the New Right is using to chisel away our resolve, and sculpt the thinking of their people, is this emotionally laden topic, abortion rights.

According to Deirdre English, a reporter for *Mother Jones* who infiltrated the National Right to Life Association's conference in California, the anti-abortion movement is supra-organized, from the male-dominated top to the grass-rooted sandals of their vast volunteer army of housewives of all classes. The convention was peppered with alternative action terms and concepts. Confer-

ence members attended "workshops" on "non-violent direct action," they were inundated with attractive brochures, and presented with "organizer's handbooks." Workshop leaders (usually Catholic housewives-- the NRLA male role was reserved as conference speakers) called themselves "activists," and were adept at handling the media. It was apparent that since the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, the Right to Life Forces have had time to learn from the left and to organize, organize, organize. They have the funds and they have the know-how to use advertising techniques that do not stop at innuendo.

The New Right is not only bulwarked by avid volunteers, it is also plentifully endowed with money. English has documented evidence that the Catholic Church supplements the right-wing multi-million dollar benefactors with hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. And, of course, the Church's association lends the movement free meeting places and organizing accessories (movie projectors, etc.). The enormous amount of money that the NRLA receives allows them access to the newest in media equipment including computers for use in their infamous Voter Identification Project (VIP). (This program, staffed by telephone volunteers, pegs voters on how they'll stand on the Right to Life question, and registers those which favor an HLA stand, if they are not already registered.)

According to English, the New Right volunteers are asked to canvass door-to-door, picket clinics, hold fundraising activities, speak and show slide shows of fetuses at schools and community forums, lobby congresspeople and telephone (part of VIP). One woman spoke about posing as an abortion clinician to dissuade women from entering the clinic. It didn't matter what kind of "horrendous problems" the women seeking abortions were having-- what was important, indeed, why she needed the help of her God, was to convince "these girls to

have their babies."

As realists, we cannot lose sight of what the Human Life Amendment will mean for us, and for our daughters. We cannot allow the victory that we won in the Supreme Court 7 years ago to dull our commitment to sustain the right of control over our reproductive organs. Nor can we underestimate the power of our anti-choice sisters.

We need to remain alert, active and aware of other targeted groups. This is fairly easily done, for the New Right is adamantly anti-gay, anti-minority and anti-poor. We must forge immovable coalitions, even in this climate of repression. We must insist on male responsibility for conception by equal child-rearing responsibilities, and improved male birth control. We must continue our legislative campaign for equality on the job. We have to work to establish quality child care centers as a working person's right.

We cannot allow the New Right to tar over our new-found freedom with the muck of outdated cultural systems. For they no longer work, and have been exposed as empty, indeed destructive ways far too vividly. As Deirdre English points out, the Right to Life woman is not opposing abortion for herself, for she can refuse the procedure under current laws. She is demanding a restriction of abortion for others. With this understanding of the New Right's underlying intent, our position becomes clear. Accepting and understanding the emotional difficulties of abortion, we must still advocate for the right to choose an abortion if we need one. We cannot allow a woman who cannot face life with a burdensome child to be accused as a murderer, when she stops a pregnancy by abortion. As responsible women actively encountering our social realities, we must act now, individually and collectively, to defend our right to necessary abortion. ☐



Graphic by Toby Schermerhorn and Franschultzberg

ABORTION:

by Dale LaBonte

Reproductive rights have become the political football again. As the "Right to Life" has caught on, the issue of abortion has moved from a secure right to a threatened privilege. The 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion nationally argued that states may not invade the privacy of a doctor-patient decision concerning her body. This victory for the medical profession was also a victory for the Women's Movement-- or so it seemed.

Abortion became available for a large number of women, with clinics doing a land-office business and the issue was put on the back burner by feminists. Watch-dog groups like the National Abortion Rights League and state organizations like Mass. Organization for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (MORAL) continued to alert the women's movement to legislative threats, but reproductive rights was no longer a widely discussed issue. The results of this neglect have been sad. Abortion has become a method of birth control for some women, primarily those for whom the pill and the IUD are a danger to their health. The majority of women who chose abortions are young, often teenage. For many women, sterilization became the most desirable form of birth control.

All these results have come from the cultural attitudes that deny sex education to the general population, perceive women as the ones who should shoulder responsibility for our ability to bear children, and prevent women from earning a decent living for our labor (both in the home and in the workforce). When these assumptions are applied to poor white women or to women of color, the effects are disastrous. Legalized abortion ended the tactic of using speak-outs and media campaigns as ways to educate the public to the horrors of quack abortionists or do-it-yourself (with Drano or a coat-hanger) techniques. Unfortunately, the attempts of states to cut off abortion payments for low-income women has caused these practices to continue, but without the public outcry. Now that one-third of the child-bearing age women in Puerto Rico and all the women in some Native American communities have been sterilized, the issue

Watch on the Right



Pro-Choice Rally in Springfield

Photo by Kathy Kirk

1970: New York passes a bill legalizing abortion.

1973: U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Roe vs. Wade* upholding women's rights to choose abortion. Pregnancy divided into "trimesters."

1976 Hyde Amendment to HEW appropriations limits Medicaid funding.

1977: U.S. Supreme Court upholds Hyde Amendment, ruling that states are not required to fund nontherapeutic abortions. The Court also rules public hospitals may refuse to perform abortions.

1980: HEW appropriations exclude Federal funding for any abortion, regardless of threat to life for the mother or in situations of rape or incest.

1981: States pass "consent" laws requiring minors to have parental or court permission for abortions, unless they are married or have emancipated status.

of sterilization abuse has finally been added to concern about reproductive rights. States which are trying to cutback access of the poor to medicaid-funded abortions are still willing to pay for sterilizations.

Clearly the issue of abortion is a much broader one for feminists than we'd like to think. And the efforts of anti-abortion forces have made it a pressing one. Not satisfied with attempts to cut state and federal subsidies for abortion, numerous right to life bills are on the federal docket. Ranging from limiting abortions to those required by women who have been raped to outlawing all abortions (even those that would save a woman's life), such legislation has wide-spread

support. NARAL reports that anti-abortion letters outnumber pro-choice by as much as 100 to one.

The most insidious aspect of this Right to Life campaign is the attempt to add a "Human Life" amendment to the Constitution. If ratified, the Constitution would protect the right of the fetus from the moment of conception. Abortions under this law would be considered murder. It is possible that the birth control pill and the IUD would also be outlawed, since they can prevent a fertilized egg from becoming implanted in the uterus.

The Senate Judiciary Subcommittee is presently hearing testimony concerning when life can be considered to begin.

The April 23 hearing has been limited to exclude anyone with a pro-choice position. S-158, the subject of the hearing, is the first human life piece of legislation to begin its journey through the conservative-packed Senate. If this statute is passed along with companion legislation in the House, it will stop just short of a constitutional amendment, limiting any court from ruling on state anti-abortion laws except the Supreme Court.

Coming at a time when our energy is already needed in too many other causes, going back to square one with abortion is exasperating. Yet when added to images of women presented by advertising and the media, the economic threat posed by federal and state cutbacks, the increase in the military budget, it is clear that women are the victims. The attack on abortion is part of a concerted effort to worse women back into the home, out of the workforce, into dependency on men.

men. The intensity of the backlash is an ironic statement of the effect feminism has on U.S. life, at least psychologically. While women continue to do the nursing, feeding, educating and organizing of the population at the same rate of pay we earned in 1960, feminist attacks on patriarchy have the men feeling threatened.

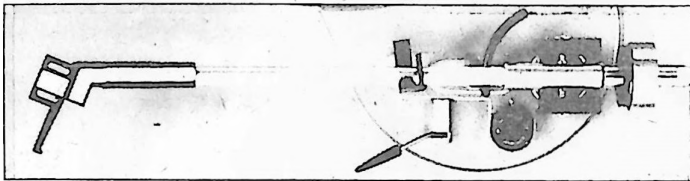
Unfortunately, it is women, too, who are threatened. Working against their own self-interest by trying to bolster the nuclear family and outlaw gay and lesbian rights, women are the primary workforce of the right to life campaign. The women's movement proved that the organizing efforts of thousands of housewife volunteers can be successful. Now the Moral Majority is using that lesson to lobby legislators, generate publicity, and mobilize demonstrators. "Women's right to choose" isn't a catchy slogan life "right to life." It even has a selfish ring to it. But it's our defense of that right to decide for ourselves how we will live, who we live with, when and if we will bear children that needs our urgent attention. Women throughout history have been forced to forego their right to life for the sake of their families. It is time we reaffirmed our right to make our choice for ourselves.

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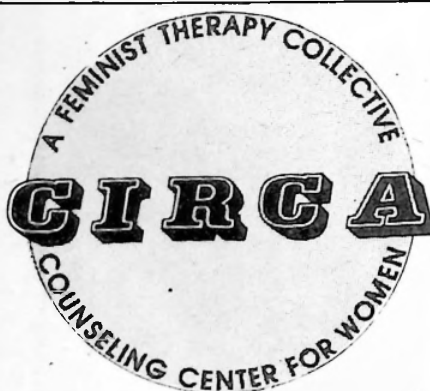
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I remember coming home from school and finding my mother hanging over the edge of her bed trying to relieve the intense pressure of her migraine headaches. I used to crawl under her bed and lie face up on the floor and talk to her.

"mom?"

"Hmmm"

"whatsa matter?"

"I have a headache."

"oh. when are you gonna get better?"

"I don't know, Amy."

Her strength carried her though the mental, physical and financial demands of being both mother and father to three children. As I grew older I began to recognize the strength of her character. I was both terrified and proud of it.

Now, away from home and away from my mother, I find that she has passed her strength down to me. In her subtle way she has taught me to like myself and those around me. By watching her and learning from her actions I have seen the profits of her strength. I see her optimism and I see her faith. I see her warm hand and I see her determination. Of all the many gifts that my mother has given to me, the gift of strength is the one I cherish the most.

Amy Jenness

I was born with a strawberry birthmark over my left eye. It's covered now, with eyebrow hair and bangs. But, when I was tiny, it was much more obvious, an angry blemish on the smooth lustre of a baby's complexion. My mother has told me since, that she superstitiously feared that my birthmark foretold the beginning of a downward spiral in child-bearing luck-causing her to view the upcoming births of my brother (5th) and sister (6th child) with foreboding.

I, however, knew nothing of her fears. As a matter of fact, when other kids pointed and teased, I simply rubbed my nose, and retorted with matter-of-fact superiority that the strawberry mark was my kiss from God, signifying God's particular fondness for me. (It was all very logical- my mother wore red lipstick that lingered on one's face, naturally-- so would God.)

The knowledge of my specialness was born out all through my early school years, as I stayed at the head of my class, and ran blithely around as class athlete. As a matter of fact, I often wondered where the other head of the class' kiss from God was located, as it wasn't in evidence upon the usual exposed skin areas.

It has only been lately that I realized exactly how devastated I could have been had I viewed my abnormality in a different light. And I thank my mother for her early gentle lesson that self-concept is 90% of societal evaluation, and 100% of ability.

Kathleen Moran



Gifts from our Mothers



When I grow up I want to be a mother but... I wanna travel and...

We can't buy that dear, it's too expensive

Who's still holding the baby?





A Mother's First Thought

Today
I awaken
and all my worries—
they don't oversleep either.
Above, they are clamoring
like an umbrella
of blackbirds
cawing and clawing.
They remind me
about butter for the bread
and that last five dollars
that won't get you
half of it.
Or it won't matter—

Tomorrow
one of the men
of science
a man with a thoughtful look—
who reads dials
who checks pressures
a man with a family
a man of reason
who has never held
his child closely
in his arms
who has never felt
his son's fear
of the dark, cheek
next to tender cheek
against the nightmare
of the world
this man with a thoughtful look

might slip the wrong switch
one night before dawn
and the fallout
not like these screaming birds
not with any noise I know
this lingering poison
will be quietly resting
on my daughter's pillow
a cloud, alive
and white with death.

Anna Dembska

this world was not from any lack of trying on my parents' part. I know from the stories I was told and from photos of my early childhood that I was a wanted child: it shone through in the matriarchal groupings where I was the first grandchild, the first niece, the first of the next generation.

I was a chronically ill child but I did not sense at the time how much of my mother's energy and my father's concern was consumed by the state of my well-being. My mother turned my years of bedrest into a matter-of-fact but ever-varied existence, plying me with books and games, paper and pen, and helping me to develop a saving love of "foreign" adventure, poetry and philosophy.

I do remember times when my mother was full of mysterious joy followed by times of unshared sorrow. Days there were when the hush of an interrupted conversation and a sense of concealed tears in the air told me only that there were levels of existence in my household about which I could know nothing.

One day when I was seven, my mother told me that I was soon to have a little sister or brother. My sister Margaret was born when I was seven and a half. My sister Elizabeth was born four years after that, and my brother Peter in another two years. My mother bore us all over a fifteen year span.

I was in my teens before I knew that I had been my mother's ninth pregnancy: all the others had ended in miscarriage. And seven pregnancies had preceded my next sister's birth. I remember being astounded by the determination my mother must have possessed that I *would* be born.

In the years of my adulthood, with all the challenges of choice that I have faced, I know that somewhere inside me, I have been constantly supported by my sense that *there is a place in the world* for me. My mother has given me that gift, the foundation on which I make my stand. She wanted me.

Michaelann

Graphics by Susan Lindman

Women Artists

by Susan Haidar

In the past decade there has been a reevaluation of the nature and function of art in today's society. Artists and critics or art are beginning to reassess the meaning of their roles, and the relationships of themselves and art to society. One present trend is a move away from creating art that addresses only the "problems of art"—aspects such as color, composition and abstract form. There is a growing concern with the question of content in a work of art. What is the work trying to do or say? And to whom is it addressing itself? These questions are not just intellectual musing. They demand that art be seen as a mode of communication (something that is intelligible and accessible to people other than just the artist her/himself).

Many women artists are dealing with these questions of content in their own work and applying them in criticizing the work of other artists. Contemporary women artists have had to confront a male-dominated history of art, an art-system that recognizes the accomplishments of men before women, and a culture that often does not criticize the sexist images that appear both in the fine arts and in popular mass media. Given these facts, women artists have had to ask themselves what it means to be both artist and woman. Do women artists have a unique point of view? Does their art reveal different content and forms than their male peers?

Some women see their role as artist as completely separate from their sex. Others answer the question in terms of biology, saying women tend to produce certain types of images related to their sexuality. This "biology as destiny" argument indeed seems a limitation to women and a narrow view of what encompasses art imagery. A more inclusive view recognizes not only biology but more importantly, the historical and social situations unique to women. The work of women artists may reflect different values and issues than that of their male peers; this is often a matter of conscious choice. Some women artists are choosing to directly deal with the situation and needs of women as a part of their work. They address such issues as rape, pornography, and women's history. Others express feminist concerns more indirectly through a conscious concern with life, growth and nature.

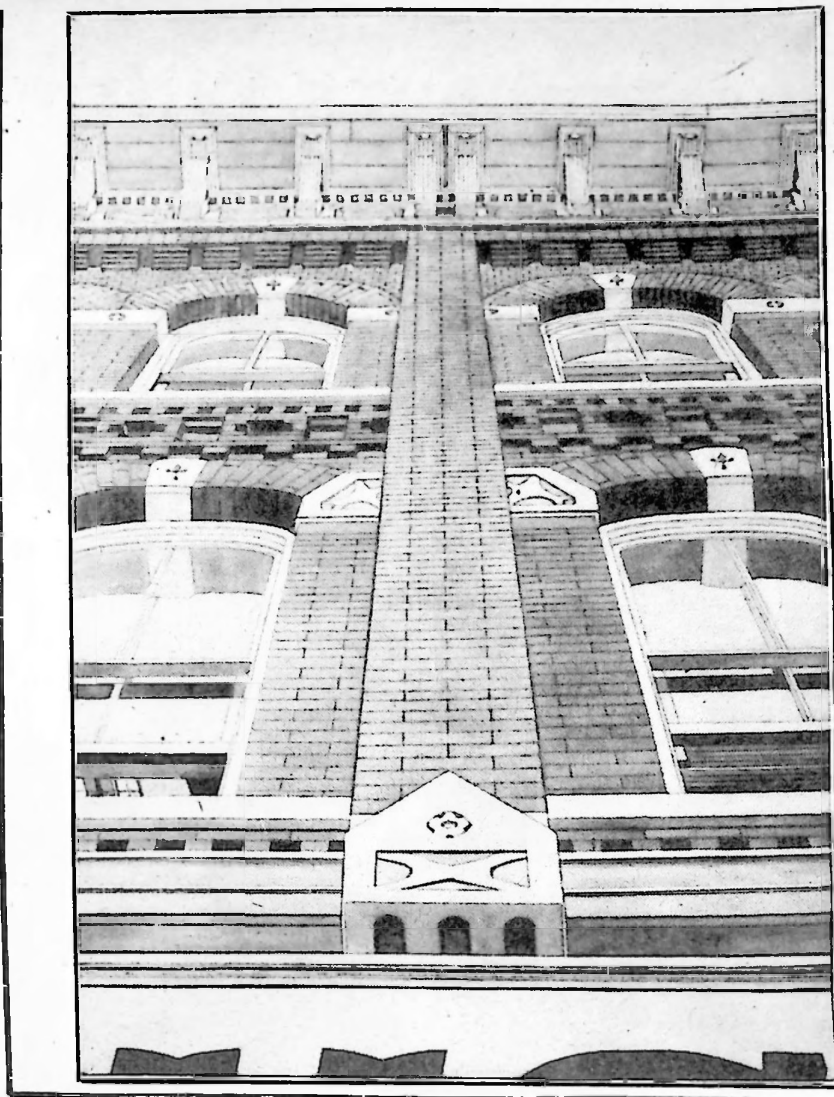
In celebration of International Women's Week, Herter Gallery—under the direction of Janet Feldman—presented the work of several contemporary women artists. The work of Ann Sperry and Nancy Spero was exhibited in the

Gallery March 2-20th. Performance artist Suzanne Lacy gave lectures and a workshop March 3-5. Although widely divergent in form, they all dealt with issues and values of particular concern and interest to women.

Ann Sperry's work was, in some ways, the most traditional of the three artists. Because of her use of abstract forms and the materials she uses in her work, it is readily linked with the abstract tradition in contemporary art. What I experienced to be exciting about her work was her fusion of abstract form with content that showed her concerns as a woman/feminist. Entitled "Wallflowers," her work consisted of floor sculptures and wall-reliefs created from welded steel, which she then painted. In her work she makes use of purely geometric elements such as triangles, circles and grids. However, she mixes these pure, geometric forms with more curvilinear pieces of steel, and with her "flower forms." These forms and her use of color take her work beyond the realm of geometry and into the world of metaphor. References to nature and sexuality were apparent. Her use of color included earth tones such as browns, greens and muted pinks. These were countered with smaller amounts of a more brilliant color—a light blue, triangle, turquoise, bright yellow and silver. Her colors were those of a garden in bloom. The titles of her pieces—"In the Garden," "Joys of Love," "Celebration"—clarify the nature of the metaphor in her work. They easily point us toward the artist's intention.

Ann says of her own work, "My Wallflowers are a celebration of growth and life and the process of becoming. . . . Using the flower as a symbol for life seems to link Ms. Sperry with other women artists who consciously attempt to deal with life processes and female sexuality in their work and express it symbolically. Specifically, I am reminded of Judy Chicago, who has used a 'butterfly-like'/'vaginal-like'/circular image as a positive symbol for women's growth, history and sexuality."

It is interesting that Ms. Sperry's works are created of welded steel. Clichéd images of the woman artist do not include "woman as welder." Ms. Sperry takes both a way of working traditionally considered male, and a medium usually associated with men (Steel was considered brutal, cold and dangerous by artist David Smith) and turns it into a form that meets her own purposes as a woman. "Because I am fascinated by the strength that lies beneath apparent vulnerability, I enjoy coupling tough industrial steel with soft pastel and metallic color to make images that are at once gentle and aggressive."



Painting by Eleanor Young in the Valley Women Artists exhibition
Photo by Mary Barnstein
Hampshire College

Janet Feldman

Nancy Spero's work is very different from Ann Sperry's, and explores different themes, while sharing a feminist intent. The piece that Nancy showed during International Women's Week, entitled "Notes in Time on Women, Part II: Appraisals, Dance and Active Histories" is a paper scroll consisting of 24 panels that total 225 feet in length. Through images and text these range from childbirth, Goddess worship, divorce and menstruation, to women's role in revolution, Black women and women who love women—all part of the rich culture and herstory that women have created.

The images in this piece are drawn from sources ranging from Greek mythology to the artist's imagination, while the text consists of mythological, historical and contemporary references, some authored by women and some by men about women. Each panel, and the piece as a whole, deals with the underlying theme of the oppression of women, how we have defied that oppression historically, and how we continue to do so.

Nancy's direct treatment forces us to confront women's oppression and our

defiance of it in a way that one is not used to when approaching most art, which tends to avoid controversial or uncomfortable subjects. "Notes in Time on Women" is not a "typical" work of art however: its theme, form and content defy traditional concepts of what "art" is or should be. Its direct political defiance of propriety and tradition is one reason why it moves people, shakes them up, and makes them see a vision of a world that is usually not communicated in such a bold and shocking way.

"Notes in Time on Women" has messages for both women and men. For women, it is a statement of our anger, sorrow, defiance, joy, our sense of place in the world, our common bond as individuals and as sisters. To men, the piece is similar but different in that it is speaking to those who have been instrumental in our oppression. In this context the piece becomes a battle cry, a demand for justice.

The ordering of Nancy's images, together with the content of the piece, "makes clear that feminism is an apocalyptic event," out of which will come the liberation of all women, be it with or without men's help. ◊

Terry Garthwaite, Alive!

by Joyce Munroe

Jazz and rock performer Terry Garthwaite was accompanied by Tucky Bailey during a recent concert at Mt. Holyoke

College. They were joined by the musical drama of *Alive!* in a concert produced by Variations Productions.

Fast becoming a familiar name in the

Valley, the five women of *Alive!*, a jazz quintet capable of producing oceans of sound, once again thrilled their audience with their musical talents.

The fast moving vocals of Rhiannon combined blues rhythms, jazz scatting and gospel wailing with the heavily influenced Afro-Cuban musical sounds of Carolyn Brandy, percussion with conga, Barbara Borden, drums, Janet Small, piano, and Susanne Vincenza, bass and cello.

At home on the stage, these women have fun with their music while maintaining a deep spirituality touched with the politics of what being a woman is about. Because they are women singing about women, their music moves into a different space from traditional jazz. Bouncing off each mood they create, *Alive!*'s music swings from sweltering summer heat to the soothing lull of tidal swells, with lyrics that speak to women as healers and survivors.

Terry Garthwaite added her versatile talents to the concert, grabbing the audience with her full-bodied vocals and holding it tightly with her music. Like a pressure cooker, Garthwaite's music explodes periodically into bursts of funky rock cooled by improvisational jazz with a dash of gospel adding spice to the recipe

she cooks.

Her guitar strumming takes a back seat to her vocal talent that skips from scat singing to deep gravelly tones. Performing music that she wrote for her most recent album, *Hand in Glove*, Terry is a musician reaching into a variety of musical areas that escape precise definition. She considers herself to be moving toward a more honest musical expression.

One of the pioneer women in rock and roll, Terry helped form *The Joy of Cooking* in the early 70's, the first successful rock band led by women. The band toured for six years before its break-up in 1978.

Her first recording called *The Joy* was recorded with singer, songwriter and pianist Toni Brown, one of the old members of *The Joy of Cooking*.

Garthwaite's music hits hard with gut appeal and isn't easy to sit still with. The message she sends is one that expresses women's strength and a powerful encompassing sensitivity.

Borrowing the talents of Susanne Vincenza and Barbara Borden from *Alive!*, Garthwaite and Bailey on saxophone and flute combined all the right ingredients for a successful performance—talent, experience, versatility and pizzazz. ◊



Alive! and Terry Garthwaite in concert at Mt. Holyoke

Photo by Sarah VanArsdale

Women's Writing Group Thrives

by Janet Aalfs

There is a little Cassandra in all of us
mad
raging
angry as all hell and
still not being heard. . .

If you are who you say you are
and can do what you say you can
then
free us. . .

from *To the true witches among us*
by Joan Gibbs*

A call to action, a summons to bring forth our deepest strengths, our powers of love. The business of storytelling, incantations-- saying it is so and making it so.

April 14, 1981-- a small group of women gather on a dark, rainy afternoon to hear Aya, Jamie Blue, Angela Giudice, and myself read our work. The above lines are from the opening poem read by Angela. The reading is part of the Spring 1981 Women's Studies Colloquium at UMass.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our work with women here in the Valley and are grateful for the support



Angela Giudice and Aya of Women's Writing Group
Photo by Cathy Collins



Janet Aalfs and Jamie Blue of Women's Writing Group
Photo by Cathy Collins

and energy we receive in return. We hope to continue expanding our audience and are in the process of raising funds to publicize our work. Any group or organization interested in sponsoring a benefit or fundraiser is encouraged to contact us. One of our immediate goals is to raise the money needed to attend a two-week writing workshop this summer.

As well as working to improve ourselves, we are interested in helping other women writers to contact each other, to form networks of support for women writing. We urge you to bring your work out of the dusty boxes and dark drawers,

to collect those words and phrases written on envelopes and scraps of paper, to get on with the business of sharing our deepest selves.

For more information, call Janet-586-6831, Angela-586-1546, Aya-739-1335, Jamie-732-5800.

---The nameless group finds a name. Keep your eyes out for the sign.

*Joan Gibbs is a black lesbian/feminist poet from NYC. Her book of poems, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, is published by the February 3rd. Press.

Pornography

FROM P. 1
ands, which show all the movies, which there's absolutely no control over. 60% of the sales for the Home Video systems are pornography: and I don't mean just *Deep Throat*. People are buying and presumably enjoying *Snuff* and *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.

It's almost too much to take. In terms of tactics, we're doing the "Feminist Case Against Pornography" with community education in mind, and want to continue education, but ultimately want to supplement that with activism, but we haven't decided on a long-term focus.

EF: OK, so what about the First Amendment? I'm sure you get asked that all the time. But if one of the tactics is to tighten up obscenity laws, won't that help them divest our liberties and stores of "Our Bodies Our Selves" or "Rubyfruit Jungle?"

ED: As a group I think we differ, and we haven't worked that out in terms of a statement or anything. So I can't speak for WAVPM. In general, though, that question is usually ridiculous, since none of the many feminist anti-pornography groups around the country advocate use of prior governmental restraint. So what the charge usually means is, "I have the right to have my values, as expressed through *Hustler*, *Penthouse*, *Playboy*, be dominant, legitimized, and encouraged. You have the right to shut up."

Personally, I feel that if we could begin to shift the definition of the word obscene out from sex to violence, to racism, to gratuitous degradation, then we could think about governmental restraint on movies like *Snuff*, or like *Fort Apache*. The whole psychological framework the legal structure rests on is very anti-sex, so this would be hard to do. But the average child, watching 2 hours of television a day (and that's below the norm), will see

22,000 simulated deaths by the time s/he's 20. So she or he doesn't become a murderer or rapist-- what does that do to your mind?

EF: Something I've noticed in my study of Horror films-- that even when the victim is male (as is usually the case one out of every five times) he's young, adolescent or early 20's. The movies generally have racist imagery as well-- The Boogeyman was a good example but most films prey on and encourage the fear of the 'dark intruder.' I feel that this is quite tied up with legitimizing situations like Atlanta. It's teaching us to accept extreme violence directed towards children, it teaches us to objectify blacks. . . the implications are really unnerving.

But getting back to something more cheerful, what does the emergence of WAVPM mean for this area in particular? What kinds of things do you want to see as a result of "The Feminist Case Against Pornography?"

ED: We really want to see WAVPM become a strong and secure voice in the community. I hope that one of the things the series will start off will be study groups and consciousness-raising around this issue: there's no one, female or male, politically active or apolitical that these values-- about our bodies and what we should do with them-- doesn't affect. For this reason, I think the speak-out is going to be terrific, because the people speaking are committed to exploration on a deep level and they know there are no easy answers.

EF: Well, I'm really looking forward to being one of the people speaking!

For more information about "The Feminist Case Against Pornography" or WAVPM, write 40 Grant Ave., Northampton, MA 01060 or call 586-8127. It's going to be a hard fight, but this is an exciting start.

* See Calendar for Schedule. *

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♀'s Health Conference

by Pam

On the first weekend in March, women from all over New England met to discuss the issues we face in our health and health care. "A Working Conference on Women's Health Care" was planned and run by students from Hampshire College and was attended by 150 women with a variety of backgrounds. The fact that it was planned and run by students and run mostly out of student organizations' budgets was pretty amazing, but the attendance of many non-students and some professionals was especially exciting.

The first two days of the conference were devoted to workshops ranging from the impact of professionalism on women's health care, natural healing, lesbian healing, abortion and sterilization abuse, women's self-help and many more. The workshops were well attended and both facilitators and participants said that they enjoyed them and learned a lot. It was great to be with so many women actively concerned about our health.

Given the current economic and political environment, we felt it was important to act on what we had learned in the workshops. We will not be handed the quality of health and health care, reproductive and sexual freedoms and autonomy as health care consumers, just because we say we want them. Keeping this in mind, 20 or so of us spent the last day discussing different health issues, and brainstorming strategies and plans.

Abortion Rights- Strategy for the 80's: We talked about the urgent need to move both fast and effectively, while still striking a balance between expediency and concern for broader ideologies--tying the issue of abortion rights to related issues of economics, sterilization abuse, and women's control over our bodies. Abortion rights have been eroded in the past eight years by the Hyde Amendment and the cutting of medicaid funds, and now by the HLA and the Moral Majority.

Strategy ideas included: focusing on legislation; reaching the uncommitted masses; getting together a strong coalition and getting pro-choicers active. Ideas included: letter campaigns and petitions; newsletters; getting publicity (getting into the news); volunteering and working with existing abortion facilities; organizing with unions; and getting the backing of insurance companies. In the meantime it might be a good idea to explore alternative methods of abortion including the herbal.

Birthright: Many of the different needs and concerns in birthing fall along class lines and have a lot to do with economic needs and the inequality of health care.

We suggested educating women about the birthing process and that pregnancy is not a disease. We need to educate ourselves about midwives, home birth and other choices we may have even within a traditional hospital setting, while explaining the risks involved in these choices in lay language. We need to publicly support existing alternatives,

like midwives, by writing to our government representatives and getting into the media. We also saw a need to integrate these alternatives into the mainstream of health care without letting them get co-opted, to make them more accessible and permanent. The media could be a vehicle for this-- it would be great publicity and help with social acceptability if midwives began to appear on TV, perhaps in soap operas. We need specific ideas for bridging the class inequality in this aspect of women's health care.

Dealing with the Existing System: Good education was again stressed as we discussed problems in accessibility and quality care for all, power issues of the male doctor/female patient relationship, difficulties in evaluating our health care as consumers, and the lack of women in power positions in the existing system.

Our suggestions included a lot of types of education: awareness of our bodies and health; demystifying the "health sciences;" running hot lines and crisis centers; getting more good information into libraries; having health care information centers as a middle ground between patients and practitioners, and community listings of doctors and health care facilities that include comments of other patients. "Getting your act together

before you get sick is important. You are in a much better position to "doctor shop" before you are ill.

There is good to be found in the system and you will be unlikely to find it if you approach the system in a totally negative way. Be careful, be assertive, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. The picture in 1980 doesn't look good. Inequalities in health care are based on race, class, sex and sexuality. These inequalities make it imperative to get the system to respond to our individual needs in the full light of our differences. We must work together as women and as people and consider each other's needs as well as our own. Abortion is an obvious example of what happens if we don't. Today abortions are prohibitively expensive for many women and the Federal Government says that Medicaid doesn't have to pay for them, and yet will still pay for sterilization. Enough women have been killed and crippled in "back alley" abortions. If health and reproductive rights are not for all of us, they are not rights, but privileges, and as such, can be taken away. So we need to join together.

In attempting to make these connections in the conference, we planned a keynote address on the broad range of topics related to health care. We felt that issues of race, class and sexuality should be brought up in all the workshops, and we told this to the women running them. But both the population policy and the Third World women's healthcare workshops were cancelled, the first from lack of coordination and the latter because we couldn't find anyone to facilitate it. The conference was attended almost entirely by white women, so we decided to talk about what went wrong.

TURN TOP 18

Woman and Body

by Debra Sadlon

When I stretch out in preparation for my twice-weekly workout, there is always a bit of reluctance mixed in with the anticipation of the exercise and the dance. For even though I know I'll fall in love all over again with the joy of the movement, I'm still thinking about the events of the day, the long haul to the studio and how tired and grouchy I feel. Once I get out on the floor, however, I begin to feel the surge of energy as my muscles stretch, and I rediscover the marvellous reach of my arms and strength of my thighs against the wooden floor. With relief, I find myself more coordinated and enhanced by the rhythm of the movements. It feels so good to be alive and to move.

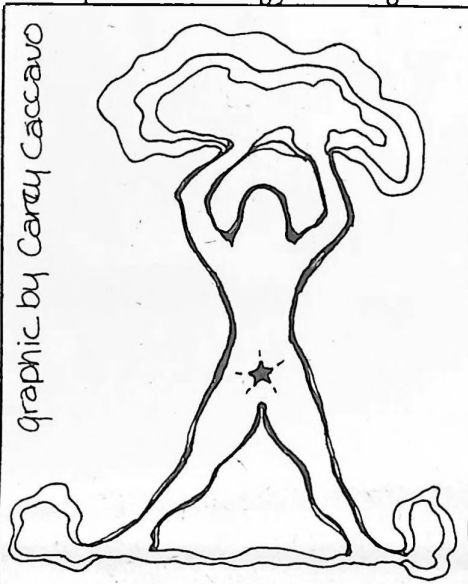
I can see by their movements, as well as by the new light in their eyes, that my fellow exercisers are coming alive as well. Still a little shy, but finally losing the sluggishness of a long day, we run through our warm-ups together. The exercises begin as personal struggles against gravity, stiff joints and unwilling

muscles. But, as the hour moves along we become more conscious of one another. The space between us is replaced by a communal grace of movement. Our focus is movement and the music is the catalyst of our miniature community.

We exercisers are in this together and over the months have become compatriots. We conspire in this fascinating, often frustrating and rigorous campaign to improve our personal health. We share a history of small success and failures, but most of all we share the pleasure of common movement. We feel each others' support and the motivation of their presence. The movement and rhythm creates a bond among the dancers and a need to dance on and on...

A Shared Movement

Movement with other human beings accentuates the animal vibrancy we feel when moving in a rhythmic and purposeful manner. Coordination becomes sharper, movements quicker and the mind more alert. Superficial chatter gives way to clearer, more subtle communication. We learn about our fellow



dancers through our common focus--the skill or movement itself. We transcend the world of "real life" and enter a simpler world. The movement becomes all-- we lose our other anxieties. The release is not only physical, but mental and emotional as well.

I have never participated wholeheartedly in a game or dance that I didn't leave feeling more refreshed and mentally alert than when I began. The concentration and effort required seem to cleanse my soul. The losing of self becomes a rediscovery of life and of the senses.

Physical activity creates a tangible world: the consequences of movement or play are immediately felt. The haze of daily life is blown away. We are free to create a path of movement, to follow its nuances. Civilization has changed so that our days are filled with less physical activity and far more tension than we can sometimes handle. Our bodies--made for the flight or fight response that

conflicts evoke-- thrive on physical activity. The preponderance of stress-related illnesses attest to how many of us internalize this tension. The effort and adrenalin released in activity is actually the most natural form of therapy for the frustrations and tensions of modern living. Performed in a group, the effects are multiplied. Whether the movement is competitive, artistic, or both, a community spirit is formed each time a group joins to move together.

Overconcern with Pefection

The population jogs, plays tennis and swims with a ferocity the physical fitness industry has never before witnessed, motivated by fear of swelling fat cells and sluggish cardiovascular systems. Undoubtedly the industry hopes the popularity of exercise will not soon abate. Burgeoning health spas applaud the trend as they collect fees from the upwardly mobile.

How often, how far, how much should we exercise? It is fashionable to be concerned with attaining that optimal state of physical fitness. This state is understandable, in our increasingly technological and sedentary world. As the pop-sociologists have duly noted, the

TURN TOP 15

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Sexual Harassment

by Iris Young

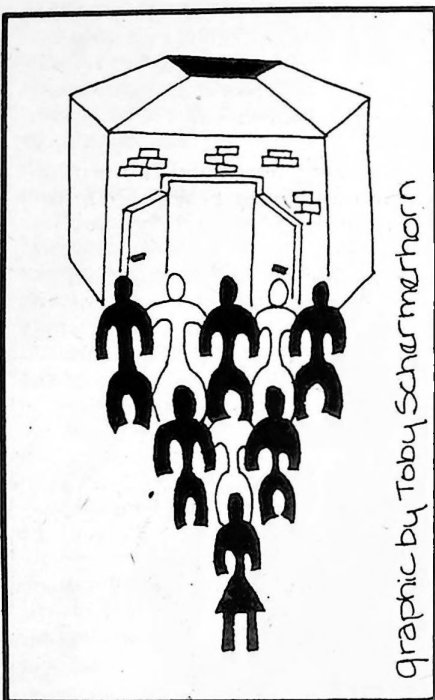
On March 28, 1981, Adrienne Rich sent a letter to the President of Clark University in Worcester. She informed him that she was rejecting an honorary degree from Clark which she had earlier accepted, because of their handling of sexual harassment charges brought by two women faculty members of the sociology department against its one-time chair, Sidney Peck.

Rich's letter culminated a complex series of events beginning nearly a year ago, which have polarized the Clark University community, and Worcester itself.

In June, 1980, Ximena Bunster filed a written complaint with the university, charging Sidney Peck, her chairman, with sexual harassment. Bunster charged that Peck had behaved improperly on several occasions, peaking in March, 1979 when, she claimed, Peck said that if she would "become my lover and let me kiss you on the lips," that he would try to help her further her career at Clark. Peck denies the incident.

In September, 1980, the University instituted proceedings under its guidelines for sanctioning or firing a tenured professor, and the faculty Personnel committee began to inquire into the complaint. A month later, Bunster protested the ad hoc and haphazard process of inquiry the University was using. She called upon Clark to formulate a general procedure for handling sexual harassment complaints, which would protect the privacy of parties, give adequate notice of charges and countercharges, and inform parties of how findings would be determined and what their ramifications would be.

When the University responded that their hearing procedure on the case was appropriate, Bunster, joined by another sociology faculty member Betsy Stanko, filed discrimination charges against Clark with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, protesting both sexual harassment and retaliation for their complaints. Despite repeated requests for action from Bunster and Stanko, to date the EEOC has not acted on their complaint.



In December, 1980, the University issued a statement of charges against Peck, based on the findings of the investigating committee. Peck thereupon filed a complaint against Clark with the

National Labor Relations Board, claiming that charges had been brought against him because of his radical activity.

Both Peck and the two women received considerable support from students and faculty, and throughout the fall acrimonious discussion splintered the already fragile radical community. Peck, a long-time activist and labor sociologist, had brought several radical and feminist sociologists, including Bunster and Stanko, into the department. Clark University has a history of putting the heat on radical professors, several of whom have been denied tenure. Thus many students and faculty, including some feminists, have agreed with Peck's claim that the University has been out to get him, and that therefore Bunster and Stanko's claims were false.

Bunster and Stanko, among the founders of the women's studies program at Clark, have received at least as much support from students and faculty. Many have argued that what Peck claims was warmth and camaraderie was in fact intimidation of women employees by a male boss.

In the opinion of this writer, it could well be true both that Clark University was harassing Peck, and that Peck was harassing Bunster and Stanko.

From January to March, 1981, negotiations took place between lawyers for Peck and the University, while debate over the case continued to rage on and off campus. On March 18, Bunster and Stanko were informed that negotiations had broken down, and that no settlement discussions were underway. But two weeks later, on March 24, Clark University and Sidney Peck signed a document, dated March 4, dropping all charges against one another and releasing one

another from liability. Bunster and Stanko were not informed that the signing was to take place. Peck was granted a leave of absence for the rest of this school year, and a sabbatical leave for the next.

The women's community in Worcester is outraged at the agreement, in which the University gives no reasons for dropping the charges. The University has abandoned the case, leaving Clark women still without a grievance procedure for sexual harassment claims, and still vulnerable to retaliation for making those claims.

This point has been painfully brought home because Peck has filed suit against Bunster, Stanko and three other women, charging them with defamation of character. It appears that Peck received the names of the three other women from the committee before whom they were told they were testifying in confidence. Peck seeks damages in excess of \$23 million from the five women.

Whatever the true story about the interactions between Peck, Bunster and Stanko, it is clear that the major culprit in the affair is Clark University. Through its treatment of the case, it has succeeded in pitting radicals and feminists against one another, sapping energies which ought to go into fighting the New Right and social service cutbacks. Faced with a potential labor practice investigation and possibly a suit, the University has run scared, sent Peck away while things "cool off," and left all women vulnerable to arbitrary and insulting treatment.

To make donations toward legal fees of the five women, contact the Committee for Fairness to Ximena Bunster, et. al., P.O. Box 1, Cambridge, Ma. 02139.

Women in Worcester are planning an action in protest of the case, to take place on Commencement Day, May 17. For more information, contact Linda Cooper, 617-752-2495. ☐

Women and Body

FROM P. 14

70's have been the decade of the "Me Generation." For women especially, advertising and media have turned the growing fitness consciousness into a preoccupation with physical perfection.

There is something missing in compulsively jumping onto the fitness bandwagon. It is the obsession with improving self- to the exclusion of the essential elements of play and of community. We take ourselves too seriously. Many of us concentrate upon the competitive aspects of sport and physical activity and remain unaware of the mental, emotional and social benefits. We hit, swat, run or swim in isolation, or with total disregard for the participant next to us (unless we are avidly trying to outdo her). Instead of acknowledging to each other that we are really exercising for our health, we stay "cool" and look the other way. We try not to involve our neighbors so we don't have to risk embarrassment. But shared exercise can

be a far sweeter undertaking and the results of activity are more successful when the experience is communal.

A Growing Awareness

Our society has long been delinquent in sanctioning physical movement opportunities for women, especially movement performed rigorously and in groups (i.e. sports). In contrast, men have long enjoyed the camaraderie provided by the sports network. Their sports habits begin in high school or earlier, and is often carried on in later life through community recreational sports and through business contacts (golf, athletic clubs). In fact, sports activities have been the acceptable method for men to congregate and to touch one another.

Until recently, women were not given the opportunity to build skills for healthy exercise. Worse, we were taught that participating in sports or heavy exercise (beyond cheerleading, of course) on a regular basis was beginning unladylike,

and at the very least, unnecessary. Wrong on both counts. Women everywhere are now realizing the necessity and the pleasure of exercise.

Women have historically been the educators, the organizers and the proponents of the best and most human rhythms of society. Now we can work together to support sports and physical activities in the community. In particular, recreational sports for women are important to support, as they have been either non-existent or considered unimportant by the people who finance community recreational opportunities.

As primary caretakers of our families' health, women should be concerned with what movement skills are taught in the schools. Are children taught to cooperate, to move together and to appreciate the grace of movement? Is fitness taught for personal health? Is there an acknowledgement of the inherent beauty and benefit of movement itself? Unfortunately, the object of physical education is usually to promote

competition: the goal is to win, or to have the biggest, strongest, or most beautiful body. There's too much emphasis on inter-school athletics, instead of focusing on activities with classmates and intramural sports. Team sports that are encouraged are generally not available in the community after the age of twenty-two.

The joy and play is equally as important as the social and physical rewards. It is important for movement to be a way of joy in the community and a common focus. The activities must include our whole society (women, youth, the handicapped and the elderly) because everyone needs good health. As we learn, we can teach our children to love the beauty and satisfaction that comes from skilled movement.

When the exercise period is over, I know a deep pleasure. Mind and body have worked together in a rare and delightful partnership. No longer reluctant or stiff, I've enjoyed a non-spectator sport. It's the dance within us. ☐

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WORKING Together AGAINST WAR

feminism and militarism

by Marguerite Sheehan

Pacifism has long been seen as a quality and a way of life to which feminists could not afford to subscribe. "Passive" has been equated with submissive, compliant, nonresisting, accepting without objecting. We have been working toward assertiveness, taking control of our lives, fighting back.

When I first heard about "Feminism and Militarism: A Conference for Women" sponsored by the pacifist group *The War Resisters League*, I questioned how possible it was to combine the two seemingly divergent philosophies.

Would this be a few days to gather together, to say loving, peaceful things to each other, to learn to "turn the other cheek", to forgive the men who rape and war on us as women and on the earth itself? "Do we really have the time to be passive?" I thought as I drove through the countryside to Camp Speers-Eljabar in Dingman's Ferry Penn. where the conference was to be held.

My two friends and I arrived on Friday night, April 10, found cabin space, and fell asleep to the sounds of more cars parking and women stumbling into our cabin throughout the night. In the morning, 150 women were gathered from Penn., New Jersey and New York, but some were from as far away as Florida, Burlington, Vt. and Chicago. Almost all of us were white, ages spanning from the early twenties to women in their sisties. Our class backgrounds varied as did the organizations to which we belonged. I soon found out that in sponsoring the gathering, *The War Resisters League (WRL)* had made a great

effort to invite and encourage women from many different philosophies and backgrounds to speak and to facilitate workshops. Many but not all women called themselves pacifist; many but not all called themselves feminist. And there were many different definitions of these terms. There were lesbians and heterosexual women, women with and without children. This was to be a time of dialogue. "Our sisterhood and political activism must reach across social movements if we are to succeed. This is a time to share our insights and work together." (Conference leaflet)

In the welcoming speech Saturday morning, the organizers apologized for the lack of Third World women present. They said that a number of Third World women that had been invited to speak had already made prior commitments to other area conferences.

The program began with a panel discussion: "Feminist Perspectives on War, Militarism and Violence." Although each of the five panelists was asked to keep her presentation to twenty minutes, the different angles from which each spoke kept the audience spellbound and somewhat overloaded. Mary Condron from Dublin received a long ovation for her in-depth analysis of the roots of patriarchal psychology and oppression as seen in the myths and initiation rites from "primitive" to modern times. She quotes Ronald Reagan, speaking about nuclear defense, as saying, "We have it in our power to make the world over again."

Claudette Furlonge, one of the organizers of the People's Anti-War Mobilization (PAM) spoke in support of Third World women combating militarism across the world. The focus of her talk

was Liberation Through Participation. She made the analogy of Native American, Black and Latino communities as being "fortresses under the shadow of militarism." At the end of her presentation she quoted from poet June Jordan:

"I must become the action to my faith
I must become the menace to my enemies."

Karen Malpede, playwright, pacifist, mother, spoke personally about violence, the creative process, dreams, myths and the need to create new stories on which to build our lives.

Rosemarie Redlich Scherman, journalist and historian, spoke at length about the history of women working to resist war in the early 1900's.

The last speaker, Donna Warnock, feminist, pacifist and ecologist, spoke about her respect for the WRL as being an organization which is successfully integrating feminism and militarism. Donna then talked about some of the insidious womanhating connections to militarism.

Because the panel went overtime, we did not have a group discussion of the presentations, but panelists were available throughout the weekend for questions. After lunch we went into caucus (mothers, daughters, lesbians, older women, etc.) and discussed areas that concerned us personally as well as issues raised in the panel.

Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning were spent almost completely in workshop time and discussion around the meal tables. The topics were varied and we often had difficulty choosing which ones to attend. "Assaults on Nature," "Women in Relation to Libera-

tion Struggles," "Reproductive Rights and Sterilization Abuse" were some of the areas covered.

On Saturday night we viewed "*Rosie the Riveter*" and the new film "*Woman Against the Pentagon*" by Connie Blitt and Kate Donnelly.

Various actions were discussed on Sunday including a followup of the conference, a continuation of the Women's Pentagon Action, a 4th of July women's "No Taxation Without Representation" rally and the Washington Mother's Day Action.

Throughout the workshops and discussions, some areas of disagreement were evident, but the overall air of the conference was one of a great need to dialogue and to support each other, not in "passivity" but in "active resistance." My one criticism would be that we did not provide time to let out some of our creative energies in song and dance until the last morning.

Women saw the conference as one step in a series of intricate movements in working together against war. The organizers attempted to collect notes and transcripts of all the workshops and presentations. Participants will be taking back ideas and information culled from the weekend to our own local groups. Hopefully some of the connections made will be kept so that the sparks which have been lit will grow.

Let me close with a poem by Ellen Bass that was given to us in our information packets called "*Let Every Woman*":

Let every woman who has been raped, resist
abused, resist,
beaten, resist,
who has feared, resist.

Who has met her fury,
who has seen her face reflected in the moon,
let every woman who loves herself, resist.

A View from May 19th

By Beth Rusk

May 19th Communist Organization

On Tuesday, April 14, the May 19th Communist Organization held a forum at UMass entitled "Liberation in Our Lifetime: A Call to Build a Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Women's Liberation Movement," based on a recently published pamphlet of the same name. The forum featured a taped message from Assata Shakur and a speech by Judith Clark of the May 19th Communist Organization. Forums like this are being held in cities across the country to distribute among women about a program and strategy for women's liberation.

The May 19th Communist Organization is a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary anti-imperialist organization committed to the defeat of U.S. imperialism and the building of socialism, under the leadership of national liberation struggles around the world and within U.S. borders—particularly the struggles of the Black nation for land and independence. May 19th is committed to building such a movement among white people in this country and sees the struggle for women's liberation as fundamental to revolutionary struggle.

Assata Shakur is a revolutionary New Afrikan woman who, like many other Black women, has fought for human rights and self-determination for her people. Because of the leading role she has played in the Black liberation movement, Assata was targeted by COINTELPRO, the FBI counterinsurgency program that has been used to attack the Black liberation movement and other progressive forces in the U.S. Assata was arrested in 1973 during a shootout on the New Jersey Turnpike in which one of Assata's comrades, Zayd Malik Shakur, and a state trooper were killed, and Assata herself wounded. Although



graphic by Tricia Zembrusky

she was sentenced to life plus thirty years' imprisonment, Assata was liberated from prison on November 2, 1979 by fighting forces of the Black liberation struggle, and has been fighting clandestinely since then. The tape played at the forum is an address by Assata to the New Afrikan nation that was recorded for Black Solidarity Day, November 5, 1980.

The following are excerpts from the speech given by Judith Clark

"We wanted to play (Assata's) tape as part of the program because it sets the terms and the basis of struggle that have been the leading force in the development of our understanding of what we're going to put out here tonight. What allows us to call for "liberation in our lifetime" is the reality of victorious national liberation struggles throughout the world... within our lifetime, literally over a billion people have lifted the yoke of hundreds of years of oppression and exploitation are are living in societies that are transforming themselves along a socialist path, and that hundreds of thousands of women have overturned centuries of oppression and subjugation to define new roles for themselves as leaders and freedom fighters in these nations' struggles.

"Only a movement with clear principles and a clear identification of imperialism as the enemy can speak to the needs of the masses of working class women today. Imperialism is a worldwide system of monopoly capitalism, the fruition of hundreds of years of class oppression that resolves itself in its last stage in the oppression of whole nations of people for the benefit of a small

TURN TO P. 18

Not About Looking For Work

BOOK REVIEW by Patricia Cahill

Looking for Work, by Susan Cheever. Simon and Shuster.

Looking for Work, a novel by Susan Cheever, is part diary, part sexual romp, and part roman a clef, with a few paragraphs about the cash nexus in male-female relationships thrown in to give it substance. Unfortunately, it's not about looking for work.

The main character is Sally Gardens, the daughter of a famous Columbia University professor. She has been brought up in luxury, rubbing shoulders with all the stars of contemporary literature. After graduating from college with a "gentlewoman's C- average," she works for a newspaper out west for two years, then return to New York to marry a successful young editor.

This is where her problems begin. He moves to San Francisco, she follows, can't find a job worthy of her talents, opts for the full-time occupation of maintaining love affairs on both coasts of the country. One of her one-night stands leads to an article for the *Village Voice*-- and Salley is on her way up.

Unrealistic View of Work

The narrator seems to have more than a few blind spots in recounting her story, and her tone is never quite clear. Yes, she can poke fun at her own radical chic in long-ago student days, when working for civil rights in Alabama meant camaraderie, sex, and good times for her as much as idealism. Yet she seems to see no irony in her attitude toward work: she feels that she deserves a good job, but she shows no propensity for work more taxing than walking her dachshund. *Cheever shows a world where livelihood rests on having drinks with the right people, but she offers no alternative vision.*

Central to the vacuum is the *Village Voice* article that launches Salley. It's about being a single in New York. We never see the article and can't judge it. In fact, we have no evidence of Salley's talent-- only her C-minuses and the fact that she left her newspaper job feeling blue about a nasty letter to the editor. We're probably meant to assume that

the *Voice* article is composed of the chapters we've just read-- a "story" within the story-- but this is not convincing proof of her professional competence. Salley is hired to talk about herself. It's not a realistic vision of work, and it has little relation to most women in the work force.

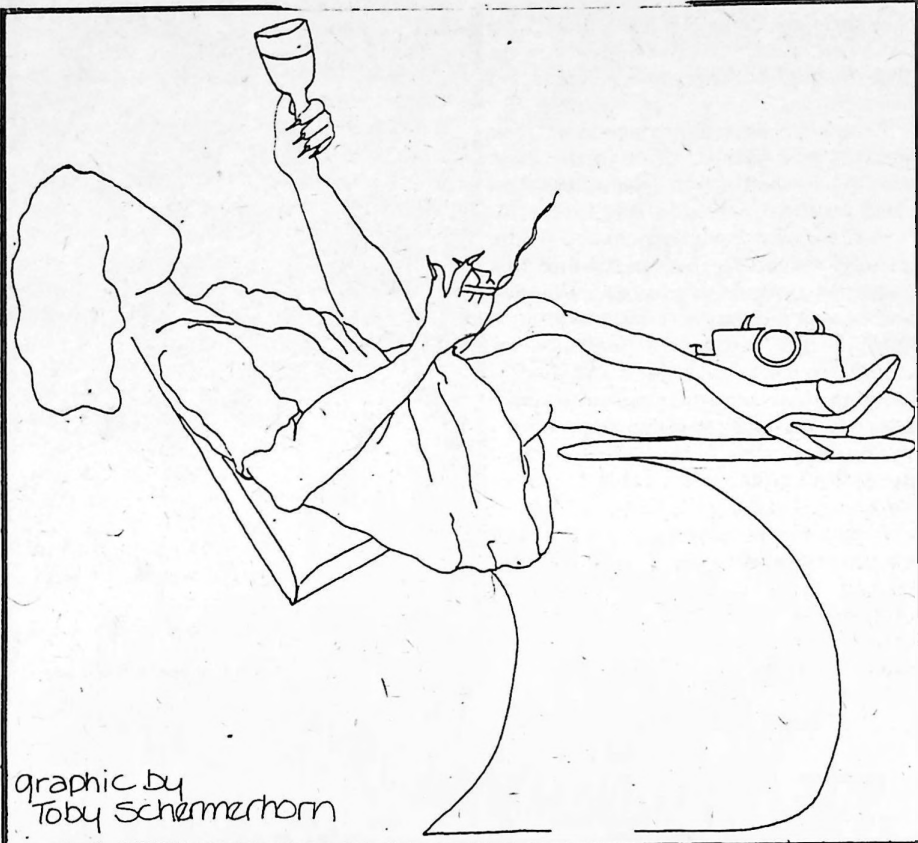
Like Erica in *An Unmarried Woman*, (a dishonest film that was admired by male critics for its "honesty"), Salley never has to worry about money. These women have terrific apartments in the middle of Manhattan, psychiatrists, nice clothes, and plenty of time.

Maybe such escapism is valid, though. It's a lot of fun watching the machinations of the artsy world in which Salley moves and Cheever obviously knows. Part of the novel's problem is that the narrator is so familiar with literary politics that she can't seem to imagine any other system; but that's the novel's attraction, too. Well-known literary names are scattered throughout: John Updike, Philip Roth, Nora Ephron. Even John Cheever (the author's father) has a cameo role when he attends Salley's wedding. Unless the reader is immune to glamor, this glimpse of the literary aristocracy (with and without pseudonyms) is amusing in a what's-the-royal-family-up-to? way. And it must be said that the author is successful in painting a picture of a crowded life, packed with a huge cast of characters.

Women and Money

Ironically, Cheever is good when she presents the idea of work as an issue apart from money. She just doesn't follow through on it. Many retired people discover that the spirit dies when a person is deprived of an active, productive life. Some women have taken the same argument further and insisted that volunteer work is not enough; that unless they can measure their efforts in money (whether they need it or not) they are not fulfilling themselves.

About midway through *Looking for Work*, the narrator presents this issue from still another angle: "How can it work anyway, this money business between men and women? Why do some people pay for other people if not in return for services rendered?" If a wo-



graphic by
Toby Schermerhorn

man is not raising children, or playing hostess or geisha, argues Salley, then what excuse does she have for letting somebody support her? She evokes a feudal framework by implying that wives are mendicants and husbands are put in the position of dispensing charity. As brutal as this construction sounds, the comparison to medieval roles is provoking. If, deep down, society considers wives to be charity cases, then no wonder they have been accorded so little respect in their own right. The answer is to get a paying job as fast as possible.

This principle, expressed at the halfway point of the novel, is a valid one. But the problem remains that Salley just doesn't act like a woman of principle.

Like other contemporary women writing novels about women (Gail Godwin, Mary Gordon), Cheever refers back to Victorian women-- the first women to be conscious of their condition. But Salley Gardens lacks the earnestness and the commitment of the Victorian heroines who have become a mainstay

of women's culture. Reading *Middlemarch*, Salley calls her husband (poor guy) a Causaubon and dreams of a Lasislaw to carry her away, but the comparison falls flat. She doesn't have the backbone or the idealism of Dorothea. She isn't willing to make sacrifices for a goal as important as meaningful work. The many literary references wind up serving only to suggest that Salley has imbibed a habit of reading fat novels from her professor father.

As an epigraph to the book, Cheever chooses a description of another Victorian, Dicken's gullible and innocent Pickwick. Here is another clue to the author's attitude toward Salley: an endearing fool who bumbles her way through life, falling into one adventure after another. That's not convincing, either, but if that's the way we're supposed to read the book, at least the title should have been different. The words suggest that we will read about a woman acting to shape her destiny-- but that's not really what she does at all. ☐

Estelle Gorfine

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Motherhood Support Group

FROM P. 7
process, as they have a big role as comforter and parent. Yet the experience is a deep one for them. Meg says that she's gotten calls from fathers who have just come from the delivery room and "the high that they are feeling is just tremendous!"

After birth, parents are faced with new stresses and strains. Part of the class training centers around parenting and child raising.

Parents who have participated in the training return to the classes and talk about what their experience was like and how it feels to be a new parent.

Much time is allowed in classes for couples to talk to each other and discuss feelings about aspects of parenting such as breast vs. bottle feeding, ways fathers can be supportive of breast feeding, and the lack of suitable, available childcare for families relying on two paychecks.

People in the classes go to each other for support and become good friends. "No one is ever prepared for the amount of crying a baby does," says Meg. "It drives them nuts; they need to be able to call up their friends and talk about how



they're feeling."

Many parents go to a series of four refresher classes when having a second or third child, so they can review their Lamaze instruction and have a place to discuss their pregnancies. Parents come so they can focus on who this new person will be and how the birth of another child will affect their family.

Ideally, parents should sign up for classes before the last two or three months of pregnancy. Women and their coaches need to spend time in advance of the birth thinking about the kind of birth experience they want, practicing their exercises and building a strong communication network.

"Lamaze training tries to provide for the best birth possible for the family," says Meg. "It's education in its broadest aspect, combining body, mind and heart—a lot of heart."

The cost of classes is covered by the Valley Health Plan and also by UMass Health Insurance Policy. For more information about the PVCEA, call 256-8621. ☐

Lesbian Mother

FROM P. 5
I think there is a little need to have power over a living being because as wardens in prison will tell you (AND this is true for all men whether they tell you or not) having total power over someone else is infatuating. It is dominance and submission even at its best and most careful and liberal. I so hated having power over my daughter and son that I vowed never to hit them, but instead offered choices. It was a good liberal healthy (for the child) way to raise children but two things became evident. First of all, it took up a lot of room in my life which was OK as long as I had no other life or interests to cater to. And second, and quite importantly, is

that I was still in power, I couldn't give it up or give it away. The kids had to choose between choices I offered them, or ones they invented only if I agreed to them. I couldn't let them run in the street or play with fire or even go to bed whenever they wanted. The sleep thing is a good example because I needed them to be in bed so I could have time to myself. And I knew that if they didn't go to sleep at a certain time, they'd be crabby and cranky the next day which would take up additional room. But yet you'd think that when a person goes to sleep or what and when they eat etc. should be an unalienable right. But what happens when their rights and your rights conflict? You win. You're in power. Let's face it. And what I'm saying is that power, even though the price is

high, sometimes motivates women to have children rather than taking the power and control over themselves.

Do you think it's possible to circumvent this dominance?

Well, one way it could be eased is if we as Lesbians took more care to validate non-biological mothers or co-mothers. The role of non-biological mothers (and there should be a lot of them per child) is a very hard one not only because the straight society ignores that role, but also because the Lesbian community tends to overlook and invalidate the amount of time, love, attention and responsibility that this woman/these women want to and need to put into a non-

TURN TO P. 20

A View From May 19

FROM P. 16
fronts in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, and within the borders of the U.S.

"...Male supremacy is an underpinning of imperialism which oppresses and exploits women for the benefit of the system...the entire definition of our role in this society is defined by the needs of imperialism. This is becoming laid more and more bare...in the heightening of exploitation in the workplace, in the policies of the Reagan administration which shift the burden of the crisis of imperialism onto the shoulders of women through the destruction of any kind of social services, and it can be seen in the necessity to consolidate women to fight for imperialism by a full-fledged strategy that begins by building a bourgeois, state-led women's movement, that projects leaders such as Jean Kirkpatrick and fights to define women's equality for white women as a fight for more power within the system...it fights on the grass roots level for the mobilization of white women into the Klan.

"The other side of saying that this country was built on the oppression and exploitation of whole nations of people is that to do so, this country had to forge a white oppressor nation and a system of white supremacy that defines within it all forces of white people including an oppressed and exploited class of women. It is based in this that white women, more and more faced with heightening levels of exploitation, maintain an identification and dependency on that system. But because of our fundamentally antagonistic relationship with imperialism, women in any kind of class society cannot be fully equal or liberated...we cannot win our liberation without making a break with the system and without waging a struggle that overturns class society and builds socialism. Any effort to define any other enemy-- be it men or a system of patriarchy-- only serves to disarm women, to isolate white working

class women's struggles from the struggles of Third World people and denies the necessity for white women to fight white supremacy.

"A second fundamental issue that has to be fought for in building a women's movement is the struggle to define our movement under the explicit leadership of national liberation struggles and particularly Third World women...There's a slogan that comes out of the struggle in Zimbabwe: "Liberation through Participation" which represents the strategy fought for by Third World women internationally and within this country that is represented in its highest expression by 10,000 women guerrillas fighting as part of the ZANLA forces in Zimbabwe and by the example of Assata Shakur and other revolutionary nationalist women...They are identifying imperialism as the enemy, they are analyzing the nature of the system and they are also struggling to build socialism as the only material basis upon which women can be liberated...There's a position within the women's movement that respects the priorities, in a certain sense, that Third World women will define in their struggle as part of their nation's struggles, but says that the struggle for women's liberation is some other strategy that is defined by white women and that women's liberation is a product of Western thought. That view is a white supremacist view that advancement is identified with the privileges of white supremacy and empire. (In fact) the most advanced thinking and understanding of women's liberation is coming from nations where the needs of the people are what define the strategies and policies of the whole society as opposed to the needs of the bourgeoisie. Its only on that basis that you can talk about women's liberation that is "advanced." We have to break out of that white-centered view of where the strategy for women's liberation comes from.

"When we say we fight under the leadership of national liberation struggles, we identify the struggles of the

Black nation, the Chicano/Mexicano people, Native American nations and the Puerto Rican nation for land and independence as explicit, direct leadership; their struggles for self-determination and human rights have exposed the exploitative and genocidal nature and the power relationships in this country...Our women's liberation movement came out of the direct challenge that Black and other Third World women made to white women where they said to us, through their struggle for human rights, that our own identification with the enemy didn't allow us to see our own oppression.

"Those struggles have clarified that the fight for liberation must mean defeating the system, and confronted white women directly with the necessity to fight white supremacy. That can be seen most sharply in the struggles against killer cops and the Klan and in the nature of what the Atlanta murders represent. The struggles that Third World people are waging, against the police are exposing them as occupying armies in Third World communities, as perpetrators of violence, corruption and terror...The government's strategy has been to build a state-led anti-rape movement that mobilizes white women to ally with the police, who are enforcers of a system that is the source of our own problem. Such a movement cannot address the needs of working class women and must be defeated...The struggle against the Klan and the police is a woman's issue at its heart.

"Imperialism will not concede anything essential. It will not grant us our liberation. It is a violent system, it wages war to preserve itself; it will wage war against women who fight for liberation. We will have to fight to win...we will have to wage revolutionary armed struggle...in the context...that is defined by Third World nations in this country fighting a people's war for land and independence. On white people's part, revolutionary armed struggle, and the building toward it, is explicitly under that leadership. We begin to do that in this period by

Health Conference

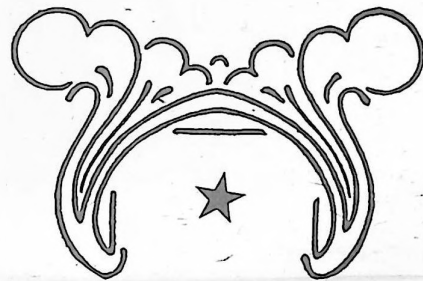
FROM P. 14

Connecting with Third World Women: Whatever networks of women knowledgeable about Third World Women's health care exist, we did not find them. After months of letter writing and phone calling we had to ask ourselves why. Part of it was our own ignorance/innocence of where to go. Also, in retrospect, the topic-- Third World women's health care-- was far too broad, and asking anyone to speak on it is asking a lot.

In talking among ourselves, we came up with two main points. We discussed the need to educate ourselves about Third World women's health care. The broadness of the topic is pretty telling of our ignorance. We needed to take the time and make the commitment to learn about it ourselves and not expect some Third World woman to come in and give us all the information in a neat package. Then, we in turn can become "informed informers." We also saw the need for connections to exist between ourselves and Third World woman and other women that may be outside our immediate sphere of contact.

These are some of the ideas that resulted from the conference. Many have been said before and of course these are just a beginning, but they are a good basis for directions in acting to make our health care and health what we want it to be.

Any ideas, responses or comments are welcome. Please send them to Susan Weiss, Box 85, Hampshire College, Amherst, Mass. 01002. ☐



learning to fight the Klan, taking on the police, because they represent the enforcers of the state on a day-to-day level.

"We are seeing in this country today the heightening attack on women...women have a right to insure the welfare of ourselves, our families, and our children, and to realize the full potential of our labor; we have the right to live without world war; we have the right to reproductive freedom; we have the right to live openly as lesbians. The Reagan administration has launched a full-scale offensive against these rights...The Moral Majority in California called for the death penalty for homosexuals...Any woman in this period that resists subjugation will face violent attacks, rape and terror...The only way we can fight for the just demands of women that are being ripped away...is first to identify that those forces of reaction have at the heart the strategy to intensify genocide and the system of white supremacy, and can only be fought on that basis."

The forum stimulated discussion and debate around a broad range of issues including the question of Zionism and the women's movement, and why it is that only under socialism can there be the full liberation of women. Part of the discussion focused on racism and white supremacy as it plays itself out in the women's movement locally, and the leadership that Third World women here in the Valley give to women's struggles. The forum raised many key issues for the women's movement to address in order to develop a strategy to deal effectively with the heightening oppression of women in this period.

The pamphlet "Liberation in Our Lifetime" is available at several area bookstores and women's centers. The May 19th Communist Organization will be holding a three-part discussion group for women who are interested in the issues it raises. For copies of Assata Shakur's statement and more information, write to P.O. Box 109, Hadley, Ma. 01035. ☐

Friday 1

Recital: Carol Bergey Skarimbos, soprano, with Constance LaSalle, piano, playing works by Handel, Schubert, Schumann, Obradors, Granados, Guastavino, Poulenc, and Barber. 8 pm., Sage Hall, Smith College, Northampton. Free.

Women's Dance: Red Barn, Rt. 116, Hampshire College. 9 pm.-1 am. \$1. Free beer.

Saturday 2

The Bakkhai by Euripides. See the 1st.

Carillon recital on the Dorothea Carlile Carillon by Marietta Storm and Alan Durfee. Lawn in front of College Hall, Smith College, 2 pm. free.

Trade Union Women's Conference: Bldg. 20, Federal & Pearl St., Spfld. Tech. Community College, 9 am. Info: Lee at 584-6675, Kathy at 256-6336, or L.R.R.C. at 545-2884.

Collective Bargaining for Workplace Problems: conference for Springfield/Holyoke area trade union and other working women. Springfield Technical and Community College (STCC), Building 20, Federal & Pearl Sts. 9:30-4:30. \$3 includes lunch. Info: Labor Center, 545-2884.

Concert: Nancy Tucker, Randie Handleman, Judy Sloan, Alison Farrell and Maureen O'Donnell. 8 pm., Lincoln Theatre, University of Hartford, Ct. All Connecticut Artists/Women's Concert Series.

Sunday 3

Student Composers' concert: Sage Hall, Smith College, 8 pm. Free.

Concert: Violinist Marsha Harbinson performing at 4 pm. at the Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield. \$3.

Celebrate with Holly Near: the release of her fifth album "Fire in the Rain". 2:30-4 pm., New Words Bookstore, 186 Hampshire St., Cambridge. Refreshments served. Info: 617-876-5310.

National March on the Pentagon: in Washington, D.C. Info: 253-7135, 253-3888 or Latin American Solidarity Committee, 545-0917.

Kaymarion's Art Show: "A Part One: Maidenhood 1945-1969." Narrated slideshow & visual exhibit. 2 pm. at Chrysalis Studio, 25 Main St., Northampton. 2 pm. for all lesbians and children. Door opens at 1 pm. \$3.00 at door, children free. Work exchange in advance. Info: 586-5514.

Good Things Collective Open House in celebration of incorporation as a workers collective. 3:00pm at 52 Main St. Northampton. RSVP 586-5403.

Monday 4

Kaymarion's Art Show. 7:30 pm. for all women. door opens at 7:15. See the 3rd.

Wednesday 6

"Women Against Pornography" Slide show followed by discussion. 8:00pm Unitarian Church, Northampton. This is the opening event in the "Feminist Case Against Pornography" series.

Thursday 7

Poor Women's Task Force: TV interview on channel 57 on "Page 57" with Richard Wexler.

announcements

Rural U.S. Women

The Northeast Conference for Rural American Women is to be held May 17th to 19th, 1981 at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. The theme of the conference is "strengthening ourselves and our communities."

The conference will include women from the 12 Northeast states and is sponsored by Rural American Women, Inc. and the Mass. Cooperative Extension Service. State planning committees are selecting participants from each state to attend the conference.

If you have an interest in this conference, please contact: Trish Sacks, Skinner Hall, UMass, Amherst. 01003. 413-545-2389

Community Development Corporation

An organization is forming in Central Hampshire County (which includes Northampton, Hadley and Amherst) which will give more control over economic resources and the future of our communities to local residents. Called a Community Development Corporation, or CDC, the organization will be able to tap into existing financial resources to guide local economic development, and address such needs as childcare, housing, rising food costs, transportation and high energy costs.

The CDC is a not-for-profit, community based organization. Across Massachusetts, CDCs have helped in housing rehabilitation, provided health and support services, skills training, and helped start up a printing press that is run as a workers' cooperative. Each CDC must decide which community needs to address first. The priorities set by each CDC are determined by the community's residents who get involved.

To find out more about CDCs and how to get involved in the initial organizing of a Central Hampshire County CDC, come to our first informational meetings: May 14, Bangs Community Center, Am-

★ CALENDAR ★



Betsy Rose & Cathy Winter

Appearing at the Iron Horse, June 1

Panel on Pornography: Women's Resource Center & Northampton Women Against Violence sponsors panel moderated by Jean Cocks, political theorist at Mt. Holyoke, with panelists Andrea Dworkin, Angela Bonavoglia and Dana Lobell. Wright Hall,

"Russians are People Too" talk by Irene and Russell Johnson at a community luncheon, noon at Unitarian Church, 220 Main St., Northampton. All welcome. Bring bag lunch. Info & childcare: 584-8975 by 5/5. sponsored by American Friends Service Committee and Northampton Unitarian Society.

Lesbian Issues: workshop at Southwest Women's Center, UMass. 6-8 pm. All welcome.

Friday 8

SPEAK-OUT ON PORNOGRAPHY and VIOLENCE 12:30pm at Campus Pond, UMass. Topics include: Third World Women and Violence, Child Abuse, Freedom of Expression, Female Body Image, Porn and the Medical Industry...plus music and readings. The Speak-Out will be followed by workshops at 2:30 held in the Campus Center on "Art, Erotica and Pornography," "Porn and Freedom of Expression," "Third World Women and Violence," and "Child Abuse." Call 586-4485 for more info.

herst, and May 20, 218 State St. (the new Hampshire Community Action Commission Building), Northampton. For childcare or transportation, call 586-0543 a few days in advance.

Getting the Job

The Springfield YWCA is sponsoring a one day workshop on job acquisition skills. The workshop, scheduled for May 16, will offer specific step by step instructions on resume preparation and interviewing skills based on employer preference research. The workshop will include interview sessions. At the end of the workshop each participant will have a complete, well-organized resume-- the type favored by the majority of employers.

The workshop will be conducted by Kathleen Cassidy, a Senior Counselor for the Conn. Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Deadline for registration and payment is Friday, May 8. Cost: \$25. Reservations limited to 25. Info: 732-3121.

Wendell Country Women's Music

Back by popular demand, the long awaited Fourth Annual Wendell Country Women's Music Festival will be held in September. This festival produced for and by women will encompass a variety of music, crafts, and food, and will have spaces for childcare and outdoor games.

We encourage all women to participate and hope to present a wide spectrum of music. We are happy to have such an incredibly resourceful, creative community and are trying to bring together your many talents in one festive event. In order to fairly and consciously choose our musicians, we need to have your tapes by June 30th. Responses to musicians will be made by July 30. Please send your tapes to: WCWMF, P.O. Box 63, Wendell, MA. 01379. Watch for more information in the coming months.

Saturday 9

Women's Day Walk: meet at Bridge St. School, 1 pm. Party afterwards at Pulaski Park.

Action/Tag Sale for Franklin-Hampshire Day Care Center. Leverett Town Hall, 10 am. Auction items and services needed. Contact Susan, 549-0588.

Psychic Skills Workshop: with Carol Newhouse. 1 pm. Info: Jerri at 586-8189 by May 7. Fee. Private Reading on May 10, 11.

WEAVING WORKSHOP Damash pick-up on the 4-harness loom. 10am-4pm at Webs, 109 Main St., Amherst. Bring own loom. For info and registration, 253-2580.

Sunday 10

Mimi Farina in concert: at the Iron Horse, Northampton. 7 & 10 pm. \$5.

Monday 11

"The Impact of Socialism on Race and Gender Inequality" Johnnetta Cole, Anthropology Dept. 7:30 pm. Herter 227. Info: 545-1923. Sponsored by the Women's Studies Colloquium Series.

Tuesday 12

Valley Lesbian Alliance: meeting. Call Network phones for info: 253-3082 days, 774-5464 eves, 665-4705 anytime.

U.S. Out of El Salvador

The Graduate Student Senate of UMass at Amherst which represents 5000 students passed the following motion at its last meeting:

The Graduate Student Senate concurs with the U.S. Catholic Conference, Amnesty International, and numerous other organizations and individuals that U.S. military intervention in El Salvador will only exacerbate the deep-rooted social, political and economic injustices which are responsible for the current upheaval.

We are firmly opposed to the Reagan Administration's policy of increasing military expenditures and arms dissemination. We see the Administration's proposed expansion in El Salvador as one specific example of this larger policy which we reject.

Therefore, we urge passage of the Studds Bill, H.R. 1509, and similar legislation designed to terminate U.S. military intervention in and arms sales to El Salvador.

Jack Delmond, President for the Executive Council, Graduate Student Senate.

Women's Community Action

Women's Community Action is a community based organization geared to networking existing groups, creating new projects, and sustaining existing groups and projects in the Valley. We feel unity is our key to strengthening our community's resources and bettering our futures. Presently staffed hours at our space on the third floor of 160 Main St., Northampton are: Wed. 9-5, Thurs. 9-1, Sat. 10-4. We have open staff meetings at the space on Tuesday nights 7:30-9:30. We are committed to increasing our staff hours and need women to fill weekly time slots of 3-4 hours. We at Women's Community Action are presently working on a number of projects. If you would like to tap into our activities, or put forth some of your own ideas, stop in at the WCA space or call 586-8477 or 268-3128.

Wednesday 13

Life Planning. Time Management: Brown Bag Lunch with Karen Eichstaedt-West, employment counselor at Everywoman's Center, UMass. 12-1 pm.

Thursday 14

Women in Media: Workshop. 6-8 pm. Southwest Women's Center, UMass. All welcome.

Friday 15

New England Co-op Conference VIII. Block Island, R.I.

Saturday 16

Bowl-a-Thon: to benefit Soujourn, Inc. 1 pm.

West. Mass. Labor & Community Support Network: Business meeting 10 am.-12 noon, cook-out and games to follow at the Playground Shelter, Look Park, Florence, Ma. Info: 586-6114, 586-6235.

Sunday 17

Women Outdoors: Walk beaches & salt marshes at Hamonasset State Park, Madison, Ct. Meet at Jackie, Sperry's, 732-4028, 10 am.

Northeast Conference for Rural Women: UMass. See announcement.

Monday 18

Common Woman Club: first scheduled meeting of membership. Call Club for info.

Films: Women's Pentagon Action, Dec: 80 and Felix the Cat. Free. Jackson St. School, Northampton. Sponsored by Casa Latina and Women for Survival. Call ahead for childcare. Casa Latina: 586-1597, Nisa: 586-1148, Fran: 256-0156. 7 pm.

Tuesday 19

Women's Pentagon Action, Dec. 80 and Felix the Cat. Bangs Community Center, Amherst. See 18th.

Wednesday 20

Asserviteness Training. Everywoman's Center. See May 13.

Wednesday 27

Working Women and Stress. EWC. See May 13.

Valley Lesbian Alliance Potluck. Call 253-3082, 774-5464. 665-4705 for info.

Sunday 31

"Women Respond to Racism": Nat. Women's Studies Assn 3rd Annual Convention May 31-June 4. at University of Conn. Info: Norma Cobbs, Pat Miller, Box. U-181A, University of Connecticut in Storrs. 203-486-4310.

June 1

Betsy Ross and Cathy Winter: at the Iron Horse, Northampton. Generous donation appreciated.

June 11

Margie Adam: Thurs., Fri. at Lincoln Theatre, University of Hartford. \$7. Students & low-income, \$5. Sponsored by Conn. N.O.W. and Women Power Coalition of New Haven. Info: 203-243-4228.

classified

Sublet Sept. to Aug. Country Cottage by lake, W. Brookfield, MA 40 min. to Worc. or Amherst. \$150 plus. Call 617-867-9031.

Women & Children Drawing Class

A class taught by Kaymarion for mothers or co-mothers and children 8-12. A 10 week class in beginning drawing- meant to be as enjoyable as it is instructional. Much time will be spent outside enjoying summer. No previous art experience necessary. All meetings in Northampton area.

Sundays 1-3 pm., May 17-July 19 in the sun. Cost: \$150-200 for each mother/child pair, plus \$25 materials and registration fee. Payable in advance. All materials and a wide variety of drawing tools will be provided. Call or write: 16 Center St., Northampton, 586-5514.

Weekend for Women

A weekend for women in body work will be held May 16-17 at the Inner Ear Studio, 25 Main St., Northampton. Fee. Strengthen, balance, and tone the female system.

Info: Beth Goren, 584-4880; Wendy, 584-6187.

Street Celebration

Present Stage Theatre Company is planning a summer Street Celebration in Northampton on July 11. All performers and groups are welcome to participate. Preliminary meetings for individual performers are May 9, 11-4 pm. All types of performers are needed: unicyclists, clowns, stilt-walkers, jugglers and many others. A large meeting for performing groups will be held May 10th, 1-3 pm. Meetings will be held at Violet Ray Theatre. Call 586-5886 for info and appts.

Exploring "sexual preference", a ten-week group for women beginning in June. Sliding scale. Lesbian/feminist therapist Estelle G. 323-5946.

ADVERTISING: for information on display ads/classifieds, call 549-3768.

Please reserve announcement space for non-profit organizations. Classifieds are available for all other categories.

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Lesbian Mother

FROM P. 18

biological child. So there might be some hope there. . . But frankly, this planet is being destroyed by male energy and violence and perhaps those of us who think it can still be stopped should consider putting our energies into that instead of having children who will also be destroyed. And then there are those of us who believe that we should stop reproducing because the quality of life and survival on this planet is so abused that we should instinctively and/or voluntarily become extinct. If women refused to have children, we would certainly have a new edge on our own power. But side by side to that I also believe that the decisions a woman makes regarding her own body are her business and her right and or choice separately from deciding to be a Lesbian. While for other Lesbians, those two choices go hand in hand.

Do you want your daughter to be a Lesbian?

Yes. I believe that Lesbianism is a superior lifestyle. I hope that in her seeing me and Linda as strong Lesbians and seeing a strong Lesbian community she will choose to be a Lesbian. As Lesbians, we do not passively condone child abuse and woman abuse by living with or being lovers with those who are responsible for it. We have not had to internalize a victim mentality, because we do not live with our oppressors. And our children, if we have any, are not behaviorally modified by us to blend in or cop to the status quo.

How would you feel if your daughter was straight?

On the one hand, I would feel that society had won out through control of the media experience and governmental approval of homosexuality. Would it really have been a choice on her part, I

ask myself? Hopefully, I raised her to make choices and not merely to accept majority rule. If it is really a choice for her then I helped raise a child free enough to live a lifestyle different from mine. If it is an act of rebellion or the easy way out, I would hope she'd examine her decision.

How did you make the decision to give up your son?

Although as the adult, I was in control of the situation, it is important to mention that it was his decision as well. Until shortly before I came out, I and my kids and their father lived a strictly religious ritualistic lifestyle. When I gave that up, and when I turned my love and energies to women, my son and I both realized that he could not possibly change enough to fit in. And he did not like the loss of power he experienced as a budding male. He was lost without the power that the religious rituals gave him for

free. He was more comfortable with his father's lifestyle. Had this not been the case, I would have transferred custody anyway since it is impossible to raise a boy in this society without having them fight you tooth and nail for the power that society grants them and imposes on their mothers.

Do you think your daughter is different or unusual because of the way she's been raised?

Yes, indeed. I, we, and she have raised a very unique young woman. In spite of the difficulties and in spite of the fact that I believe that Lesbians should be putting our energies into other creations, it is through my energies and my lover's energies and the energies of the Lesbian community and of course through my daughter's own personal power that she has grown to be a beautiful, brilliant, strong young woman with a wonderful sense of humor. ☺